

FOOTBALL AND ITS COMMUNITIES

REPORT THREE

The Impacts of a Stadium Move on the Communities of a Football Club: The Example of Manchester City FC

For the Football Foundation

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Executive Summary

This is the third interim report from the Football and its Communities research project, being conducted at Manchester Metropolitan and Sheffield Hallam Universities between October 2002 and October 2005.

The project is a detailed investigation of football's relationship with, and impact upon, various types of 'communities'. The study is based upon longitudinal case studies of three English football clubs: Leeds United (LUFC), Manchester City (MCFC), and Sheffield United (SUFC).

The brief of this report is to explore:

'The full range of 'community' issues associated with a move of grounds and how these are being tackled by the clubs.'

At the development stage of this research project, in 2001, it appeared that two of our case study clubs would move grounds during the life of the research project: LUFC and MCFC. Manchester City had already entered into an agreement to leave its Maine Road stadium and take over occupancy of the new City of Manchester Stadium (CoMS) following the 2002 Commonwealth Games. Leeds United also had plans to move grounds, but these were ultimately abandoned as the club began to encounter financial problems, as well as changes in personnel and ownership. As a result, the focus of this report is on issues associated with the move of MCFC from Maine Road to the CoMS.

The report is split into four main sections:

- **Section 2** - the **historical background and context** of Manchester City's move from Maine Road to the CoMS
- **Section 3** - an **outline of the deal** between Manchester City Council (MCC) and MCFC
- **Section 4** - an outline of the **practicalities** of the stadium move
- **Section 5** - an outline of the **impacts and implications** of the stadium move with regard to Manchester City's 'communities'

In Section 2 of the report, the research team place MCFC's move to the CoMS in historical context. The transformation of English football stadia in the post-Taylor-Report period is highlighted as a principal driver behind MCFC's aborted attempts to re-develop the Maine Road stadium and the club's ultimate decision to move to the CoMS. The commercial repositioning of English football in the 1990s is also analysed as a motivating factor behind the club's desire to increase its off-pitch earning potential. From here, we outline the shifting cultural and sporting policy contexts in the City of Manchester and beyond to analyse how the building of the CoMS was influenced by concerns with social and economic regeneration and the overall profile and image of Manchester. Finally, the research team discuss Manchester's staging of the 2002 Commonwealth Games as an example of the city's desire to link sporting and cultural events to economic boosterism and attempts to increase tourism. The need for the Games' organisers to find long-term users for event facilities is also

commented upon as the main reason behind the initiative to invite MCFC to become the long-term tenant at the CoMS.

Section 3 is principally concerned with outlining the deal which saw MCFC become occupants of the CoMS. The Sports Lottery funding agreement between Sport England, Manchester City Council and Manchester City Football Club is detailed, as is the deal which saw MCC take ownership of the Maine Road site. The section also outlines the role of the CoMS and the Sportcity site more generally within the regeneration of East Manchester. The research team comment upon the specific social, sporting and economic objectives that the Sportcity site is supposed to meet, as well as the broader regeneration objectives that are being pursued by New East Manchester Ltd (the local Urban Regeneration Company), New Deal for Communities, East Manchester Sports Action Zone, and various other regeneration bodies. To counter some of the more uncritical statements made on sport's potential to help deliver social and economic regeneration, Section 3 also details a number of alternative, more circumspect discourses on what can be achieved through sports-led regeneration. These are placed squarely within debates about the Sportcity site, and particularly in the context of the handing over of the CoMS to a privately owned football club which insisted on converting it from an athletics arena to a single-use football stadium.

In Section 4, the details and practicalities of MCFC's move from Maine Road to the CoMS are outlined. Specific attention is paid to the 'community use' plan which was drawn up between MCFC and Manchester City Council as part of the Lottery funding agreement for the stadium. Problems that have arisen over community use of the stadium pitch are outlined, as are concerns over the management and affordability of the off-field facilities. MCFC's new community plan for the period 2004-2009 (Blue : Print) is considered specifically within the context of the ground move, particularly as it has seen the club move from a fairly unstructured approach to community work to a position of defining those areas in which it wishes to deliver football-led interventions. Finally, the management of the stadium move for MCFC supporters is commented upon, not least because MCFC made some attempts to avoid disrupting micro-fan communities during the period of the move.

Section 5 is the largest section of the report and outlines the impacts and implications of the stadium move on groups that can be termed MCFC's 'communities'. These include residents and businesses in Moss Side and East Manchester, and the club's supporters. First, the effects of MCFC's departure from Maine Road on the local neighbourhood community is analysed in historical context. The research team outline residents' concerns about the future of the Moss Side area, and local perceptions of a lack of consultation over the future of the stadium site and responses to these criticisms by Manchester City Council. We then detail, from a visual business survey and interviews/observations, the effects of the stadium move on the Moss Side business community, which we conclude have not been as dramatic as some were predicting.

In the next sub-section, the research team analyses the effects of the stadium move on the residents and businesses of East Manchester. Through our ethnographic observations in the area, we detail a range of 'positive' and 'negative' relations between fan communities and neighbourhood communities on MCFC match days,

and around occasional events such as England football internationals and rock concerts. We also detail some of the measures that have been put into place in East Manchester by local regeneration groups and others to ameliorate potential points of tension between the club, fans and residents.

Through another visual business survey and through interviews/observations, the research team also comment upon the effect of MCFC's move to East Manchester on local businesses. Whilst we are not in a position to judge the economic impact of the move, we do conclude that it has not had a particularly dramatic effect on the number of small businesses in East Manchester, although it had resulted in some businesses being re-branded as MCFC-themed outlets.

In the penultimate part of Section 5, the impact of the stadium move on MCFC supporters is considered. An ethnographic account of the final game at Maine Road is presented to indicate how MCFC supporters related to the club's former stadium as a 'home'. This is followed by a statistical analysis of changes in the profile of MCFC supporters between 2002/03 (the last season at Maine Road) and 2003/04 (the first season at the CoMS). The analysis concludes that, despite a significant increase in size, the geographical and socio-economic profile of MCFC's season ticket holders remained remarkably consistent over the two seasons, with few fans emanating from areas of high deprivation. It further notes that the club's membership decreased during the period, but became more concentrated in Greater Manchester. In both 2002/03 and 2003/04, it was found that MCFC members tended to live in areas of higher deprivation than club season ticket holders. It was also found that in 2003/04 there were not large numbers of club members or season ticket holders in the vicinity of the new stadium. The final part of Section 5 details the effects of the stadium move on the rituals and practices of MCFC supporters, and on the constitution of micro-fan communities. A range of experiences are detailed which show the disorientating effect of the ground move on supporters and both positive and negative perceptions of it. Comments are also made on MCFC's limited attempts to engage neighbourhood communities as fans.

In the concluding section, we highlight some of the broader issues and lessons from this detailed case study which will inform our ongoing work as we move toward the final year of the research. In this time, we will begin to develop information on 'best practice' for football clubs with regard their communities.

1. Introduction and Rationale

This is the third interim report from the *Football and Its Communities* research project, being undertaken by Manchester Metropolitan and Sheffield Hallam Universities. In this report we aim to explore:

‘The full range of ‘community’ issues associated with a move of grounds and how these are being tackled by the clubs.’

This report follows our baseline study of the activities of community departments at the case study clubs; and our mapping of the various communities at each of the clubs. Whilst this report will consider the issues associated with the a move of grounds, it does not give a comprehensive update of the full range of community activities of the club as this will be conducted in the final year of the research.

At the development stage of this research project, in 2001, it appeared that two of our case study clubs intended to move grounds during the life of the research project. Manchester City Football Club (MCFC) had already entered into an agreement to leave its Maine Road stadium and takeover occupancy of the new City of Manchester Stadium (CoMS) following the Commonwealth Games of 2002. Leeds United Football Club (LUFC) also had plans to move grounds. The club had even held a vote amongst fans on the issue, and had identified a proposed site for the new stadium. By contrast, Sheffield United Football Club (SUFC) had no intentions of moving and were to remain at their original home, Bramall Lane, although this site has been subject to ongoing redevelopment over a number of years.

Since the development stage of this research, however, there has been one significant change which has somewhat disrupted these original intentions. Leeds United’s proposed move was abandoned as the club began to encounter financial problems, as well as changes in personnel and ownership. As such, the focus of this report will be on issues associated with a move of Manchester City from Maine Road to East Manchester.

1.1 Outline of Report

This report is structured in the following way:

Section 2 – this will provide the **historical background and context** of Manchester City’s move from Maine Road to the CoMS, including: the context of stadium rebuilding in English football in the 1990s; the cultural policy context in which this new stadium was built; and the context of Manchester and the staging of the 2002 Commonwealth Games.

Section 3 - this will **outline the deal** between Manchester City Council (MCC) and Manchester City Football Club, the justifications and rationale for this deal and critiques of it.

Section 4 - this section will outline the **practicalities** of the stadium move, issues around the community use of the stadium and how the relocation of supporters was handled.

Section 5 - this is the major section of the report and deals with the **impacts and implications** of the stadium move with regard to Manchester City's 'communities', namely the effects of the stadium move on residents and businesses in both the Maine Road area and the new site in East Manchester; and the effects of the stadium move on Manchester City's supporter communities.

Section 6 - here we present some **concluding comments** and raise a number of emerging issues.

1.2 Methodology

The methodology for this report was based around the following elements:

i) Documentary Sources

- Regeneration literature
- Resident organisation literature
- Academic sources

ii) Comparative Statistical Mapping of:

- Changes amongst Manchester City's members and season ticket holders between the last season at Maine Road (2002/03) and the first season at the City of Manchester Stadium (2003/04)
- A visual survey of business premises in the locations of both grounds.

iii) Interviews with:

- Manchester City FC club personnel
- Resident groups and other 'community' organisations in are around Maine Road/Moss Side and the CoMS/East Manchester
- Other residents in both of these areas
- Football fans

iv) Observations:

- At match days in and around Maine Road/Moss Side and the CoMS/East Manchester
- On non match days in these areas and the vicinities of each ground
- At residents' group meetings in both locations

2. Historical Context and Background

Manchester City Football Club moved from their historic home at Maine Road in the Moss Side district of Manchester to the newly built City of Manchester Stadium in East Manchester in June 2003. In this and the next section, we will provide details about this move and the background to it.

It is necessary to see the MCFC ground move within three broader contexts:

- i) the redevelopment and modernisation of English football after the Hillsborough Disaster of 1989;
- ii) the changing nature of national/local cultural and sports policy and approaches to social and economic regeneration; and
- iii) the City of Manchester's staging of the 2002 Commonwealth Games.

2.1 The English Football Context

The Hillsborough stadium disaster in 1989 and the subsequent Taylor report are rightly regarded as a watershed for English football, notwithstanding the continuities in the game which have persisted. In particular, the stipulation that all stadia in the top two divisions of English football should be all-seater, the development of the FA Premier League and its exclusive television contract with BSkyB, the flotation of clubs on the Stock Exchange, and the pursuance of new streams of income for football clubs - often utilising new or redeveloped stadia - ushered in a new commodified era for the game. Although football has obviously always been a commercial game in the modern era, this new context provided new and/or extended requirements and opportunities particularly in relation to football clubs' grounds. Likewise, in Europe, football stadia were undergoing rapid redevelopment or rebuilding and clubs were redefining themselves within new market conditions and new competitions.

As a result, many English clubs chose to either significantly redeveloped their existing grounds (Manchester United's Old Trafford, Chelsea's Stamford Bridge etc.) or build entirely new ones (Bolton's Reebok Stadium, Sunderland's Stadium of Light etc.). This allowed clubs to develop new and often improved facilities, new services and income streams such as those developed around new conferencing suites within rebuilt or new stands, and for some allowed an escape from the often restrictive inner-city sites in which they had historically been located.

In this context, on two occasions Manchester City undertook major rebuilding of the Maine Road ground. This included the rebuilding of the Platt Lane stand to include new executive boxes at one end of the ground, and rebuilding of the previously terraced Kippax Street stand alongside the pitch opposite the Main Stand. This was undertaken within a broader strategy for the overall redevelopment of that site, which is discussed in considerable detail in Section 5. Both Leeds United's Elland Road stadium and Sheffield United's Bramall Lane ground also underwent significant rebuilding during this time.

MCFC suffered relegation to Football League Division 1 in 1996 and to Division 2 in 1998. This, combined with other factors, left the club in a dire financial position and further plans to redevelop Maine Road were not taken forward. The importance of

maintaining both financial and footballing success in order to deliver new or redeveloped grounds should not be underestimated.

When we originally proposed to study stadium moves in the contexts of the case study clubs' relationships with their communities, we had also intended to look at Leeds United's move to a proposed new stadium. However, the well-documented financial problems at that club meant that their proposed move to a stadium in the southeast of the city was never taken forward. Indeed, by the time that we had begun our research in 2002, plans were already on hold. Following relegation and a change of ownership in 2004, the original plans have now been abandoned altogether, and huge uncertainty now exists over the future of their current home, Elland Road. Although not the focus of this report, it is important to recognise that LUFC drew up plans both for the redevelopment of the stadium at Elland Road to be the focus of regenerating that area of Leeds, as well as plans for a new stadium site away from Elland Road to be the centre of a new development area. Both of these have suffered as a consequence of financial and footballing failure.

At present, the future of LUFC's stadium remains in doubt, with the new owners seeking a 'sale and lease back' deal on Elland Road (The Times, 1 April 2004) and proposing the sale of their training complex at Thorpe Arch. One possible development of which we are aware, and which we will investigate further in this research as it progresses, are proposals by the Leeds United Supporters Trust for a fan buy-out of the ground, something which will raise significant issues relating to football clubs' relations with both their local and fan 'communities'.

The prospect of Sheffield United sharing a new ground with city rivals Sheffield Wednesday has been raised, each time *as a result of* financial problems at one or other club. On both occasions, these plans have been abandoned due to the deep divisions within the city's football culture and the unacceptability of the proposition to the clubs' fan 'communities'. This has resulted in Sheffield United pursuing a different agenda and strategy in relation to their stadium, one which has involved the building of a business centre and a hotel, and now encompasses proposals for a casino adjacent to Bramall Lane. These commercially-driven redevelopments of the ground and its environs have themselves brought the club into closer official contact with local communities and their organisations, something we highlighted in our last interim report.

It is notable that, at all three case study sites, stadium building or redevelopment has been closely intertwined with issues of urban regeneration. The centrality of this regeneration agenda to each of the sites has important implications for the ongoing roles of the football clubs and their engagement with the broader purposes and rhetoric of that agenda. This is placing new obligations and pressures on the roles that football clubs play within local and wider urban communities.

At MCFC, the introduction of another new football club chairman, David Bernstein, as well as an eventual return to the Premier League, meant that the club was in a more secure financial state by the time we commenced our research for the Football Foundation in 2002. By that time, plans were well advanced for MCFC to leave Maine Road altogether and take up residency at the CoMS. The process by which that happened is also worth some further explanation, which we do below. However, it

should also be noted that the better financial situation at the club which appeared to have developed under Bernstein, has now been questioned. Despite getting a new ground for little capital investment, the club have amounted debts in excess of £50m, something the club deny is a source of concern (Independent 17 April 2004). This merely illustrates the uncertain nature of football and the often temporary financial stability at clubs; something which makes long term planning on issues such as stadium and facility development more difficult than in other sectors.

Before moving on to the issues associated with the new ground, it is worth noting that even the redevelopment of the Maine Road site, and especially the building of the new Kippax Street stand, was not without its difficulties, problems and conflicts, which raise issues concerning the role of football clubs within their communities. We discuss this in Section 5 in relation to the effect of MFC's move on residents around Maine Road.

2.2 The Cultural Policy Context

The development of the CoMS can be seen partly as a result of broader changes in cultural and sports policy in the UK, and Manchester in particular. The industrial decline of the late 20th century has seen the city looking for new ways to counter the economic and social hardship resulting from that decline, like many other cities (Myerscough, 1989; Bianchini, 1989; Bianchini and Parkinson, 1993; Harvey, 1989; Wynne, 1992; O'Connor and Wynne, 1996). This has included creating agencies for promoting new investment (e.g. MIDAS); a huge building and renovation programme (largely undertaken by the private sector) which received added impetus and public funds after the IRA bomb of 1996; a pursuit of new industrial clusters and sectors; the promotion of culture, and cultural industries production (e.g. the Cultural Industries Development Service); and promotion of ways to redefine and re-image the city from one of 'grime and industry' to 'vibrancy and creativity' (Marketing Manchester 2001; Castells 1994; O'Connor and Wynne 1996).

In this process, local authorities and 'grants coalitions' (Cochrane, Peck and Tickell, 1996) are now using sport as a driver of social and economic regeneration. Manchester has done this in a number of ways:

- the attraction of major sporting events (Commonwealth Games, World Table Tennis Championships);
- bidding for major sporting events (the Olympics for 1996 and 2000);
- the building of new sporting facilities, especially as a result of these bids (Velodrome, MEN Arena);
- the use of such events for re-imaging the city;
- a determination to find end users for the facilities (the National Cycling Centre at the Velodrome);
- and the use of events and developments to lever in additional revenue, particularly relating to social renewal and combating social exclusion (The Manchester 2002 Commonwealth Games North West Partnership).

Manchester is certainly not unique in this regard. The use of sport as a driver for economic regeneration and city marketing has been a major feature of Sheffield's approach since the 1980s (Henry and Salcines 1998) and the Elland Road stadium in Leeds has been a focal point for unfulfilled plans to develop the area around it. These

developments must be seen within the rise of competitive cities (Castells and Hall 1994); the problematic use of culture for economic and social ends (Brown, Cohen and O'Connor 2000); and the wider use of sport to redefine cities (Essex and Chalkley 1998: 192; Henry and Salcines 1998), and problems with this approach (Lensky 2002). However, the Manchester context provides new nuances to these experiences evidenced in the building of the CoMS.

The changing role of sport within contemporary cities is itself highly relevant to discussions about the relationship of football to its communities, particularly where that relationship is created or renewed to deliver community and social benefits. However, nowhere has the role of one football club, as occupants of a publicly funded stadium, been cited in official discourses as being as central to community regeneration as Manchester City's role is in East Manchester. We will look in further detail at the role of local authorities within these processes of ground and facility redevelopment later in this report. However, it is important to recognise at this juncture that MCFC's move to their new stadium would not have happened without these broader shifts in the cultural and sports policies of contemporary cities.

The crucial event for our purposes here as well as for MCFC, was that within this broader sports strategy for the city, Manchester won its bid to host the 2002 Commonwealth Games, in 1995.

2.3 Manchester and the 2002 Commonwealth Games

The bid to stage the 2002 Commonwealth Games followed two failed bids by the city to stage the 1996 and 2000 Olympics. As has been written previously:

The 2000 Olympic bid was '*pitched... very much on the back of regeneration and the wider benefits*'¹ and this '*grants coalition*'² approach - delivering legacy and facilities during the bid (Manchester Arena, Velodrome) - formed the basis of the approach to CG2002 - '*primarily about the regeneration of east Manchester with a secondary agenda of securing a major stadium*'³. This reflects a broader tendency for public expenditure on culture and sport to be justified on grounds of economic benefit or combating social exclusion⁴. (Brown 2002b)

As such, the motivation for the Commonwealth Games bid and staging of the event was that it should act as a catalyst, alongside other initiatives, for the regeneration of one of the poorest areas of the Manchester conurbation, East Manchester. Alongside the bid for the Commonwealth Games, Manchester was also in the race to be the site for the new National Stadium. Although this was eventually won by Wembley, the fact that Manchester had already secured the Commonwealth Games resulted in £90m of Sports Lottery funding being allocated to build a stadium. In the end, a total of £170m of capital investment in facilities was made, as follows:

- £111m City of Manchester Stadium

¹ John Glester, 2000 Bid Executive, member CG2002 legacy team. Interview with Adam Brown, 2001. ESRC R000223291

² Cochrane, Peck and Tickell, 1996

³ Glester *op cit*

⁴ Bianchini 2002: 'This rarely extends to developing a consciousness about exclusion'

- £16m English Institute of Sport
- £32m Aquatics Centre
- £4m Hockey Centre
- £6m Shooting (Bisley)
- £1m Lawn Bowls

Of this a total of £123m was provided by Sport England Lottery Fund, ‘with the balance [£47m] funded by Manchester City Council, the Lawn Tennis Association, Manchester Universities and others.’ (Manchester 2002 Ltd, 2002: 49). Much of the additional central government and Sport England funding was secured in July 2001 following a governmental review amid fears that the Games were under-funded and might not take place (Bose, Daily Telegraph 22.6.01). In total, the Games cost in capital expenditure and operating costs £300.2m with commercial income from the event totalling £56m, although organisers claimed that Manchester itself secured an estimated total of over £600m investment (including visitor spend estimates) for the city and the region (Manchester 2002 Ltd, 2002: 49).

Staging the event left Manchester City Council in particular with a range of first class sports facilities, which constituted a physical sports legacy for the city and the region (Brown 2004: 56). Other areas which benefited from new facilities included Bolton (tennis and mountain biking) and Bisley (shooting), although the benefit - in terms of sports participation or social renewal, particularly for the poorer communities near Sportcity - remains to be seen.

There are a number of common themes in this process. First, Manchester has dovetailed sports facility building with both a broader strategy of renewing the built environment (flagship buildings); and the (opportunistic) coincidence of city centre rebuilding after the 1996 IRA bomb. Secondly, Manchester uses sport to re-image the city as a popular culture tourist destination and as a place associated with sporting success (delivery of sports events; home to sports institutions), as well as one which is seen by the private sector as ‘good to do business with’ (Cochrane *et al* 1996). Indeed, Games organisers claim that ‘Manchester harnessed the enthusiasm and energy of the Games to rejuvenate the spirit of the region as well as its urban infrastructure.’ (Manchester 2002 Ltd, 2002: 49).

In this, the evocation of a ‘spirit of the North West’ and the association of it with positive meanings needs to be seen within the context of determined attempts to promote the tourist economy at Games time and since by the tourist board, now known as ‘England’s North West’; as well as within the context of the formation of the North West Development Agency (NWDA) which was formed to promote the North West’s economy. This kind of evocation contrasts sharply with historical differences in the region; the historical and ongoing, deeply divided and often very antagonistic, football cultures and traditions (Mellor 2004; Russell 1997: 205); and the difficulties which others have cited in attempts to define a ‘north west’ identity, especially in relation to sport (Russell 1997: 205). This reemphasises the problematic relationship between ‘official’ culture and its ‘boosterist’ policy and the popular cultures associated with sport on which those policies centre.

However, it has also been part of Manchester’s strategy to use these new facilities and new developments for community, economic and social renewal. In order to achieve

this, long-term users for the new sports and cultural facilities needed to be found. Although at one early juncture in 1995/96 Manchester United raised the possibility of moving to the new stadium (as a means of creating leverage in order to gain planning permission for the further redevelopment of Old Trafford) it soon transpired that the likely long-term user for the City of Manchester Stadium would be Manchester City. At no point, apart from actually during the Games themselves, was serious consideration given to leaving the stadium as an athletics facility. At that time, Paula Radcliffe made the famous comment:

It's such a big shame they are not leaving the track down because all of my memories will be pulled up. We've got a stadium capable of holding a world championship. I am sure Manchester City have got enough money to build another. Maybe they would like to give this one as a present ([Manchester Online](#), 28 July 2001).

This was somewhat ill-informed as it implied that the stadium was Manchester City's gift to give - it is still owned by the City Council - and that they had ample resources to build their own stadium, but it did highlight a more general concern within sport about the dominance of football and the lack of any discernable national logic or strategy to help develop athletics, even though football was not even part of the Commonwealth Games. The decision to make this a football site was made in a period when not only did the country not have a world class athletics stadium, but it had also shelved plans for such a stadium at the Pickets Lock site in London, meaning that Britain had to withdraw from staging the 2005 World Athletics Championships. As such, the decision to convert the athletics facility to a football stadium seems somewhat incongruous within any consideration of a national sports facility strategy.

The process outlined above placed football, and MCFC in particular, at the centre of plans to regenerate East Manchester. The club was given new obligations as a result; something which is unique in the UK. It must be remembered that although converting the stadium from athletics to football may not have made a great deal of sense nationally, *locally* the need to secure a long term user for the stadium was a primary concern. A key consideration in this was that a *regular* user was needed, so that the venue would attract thousands of visitors throughout the year to the local area. One of the features of East Manchester, as we discussed in our second report, was that the area had suffered a dramatic population decline, poor image and had very few visitors, and as such, little inward investment or visitor spend. As Tom Russell, Chief Executive of the regeneration agency for the area, New East Manchester Ltd, has commented:

It's important in the sense that those facilities will then bring larger numbers of people into the East Manchester area on a regular basis in perpetuity and that's people coming into the area to use the facilities and spend their money in the area... and I think the other thing it's done for us is just transform the image of East Manchester from a place which it's best days were quite a long way behind it. (Interview (AB: ESRC R000223291, 2002)

Athletics and most other sports could not fill this requirement but football could, which says something about the importance of the game in terms of national and local sporting profile, economics and even tourism/visitor numbers. In 1996, Manchester

City Council and Manchester City Football Club reached an agreement that Manchester City would be the ongoing occupiers of the City of Manchester Stadium.

3. The Stadium Deal and Official Discourses on Sport and Regeneration

The deal which saw MCFC take occupancy of the City of Manchester Stadium was secured in a Sports Lottery funding agreement between Sport England, Manchester City Council and Manchester City Football Club. The details of the deal are as follows:

i) Following the Commonwealth Games, the stadium was converted from an athletics facility, to a football stadium:

- The athletics track was removed and the floor of the stadium lowered by 20 metres below the level of the ground outside.
- This allowed an extra tier of seating accommodation to be inserted, raising the capacity from 38,000 to 48,000 seats and it also brought the stands closer to the pitch, as is customary in most British football stadia.
- A permanent stand was built at the north end of the stadium replacing the temporary stand created for the Commonwealth Games (due to the different dimensions of athletics and football stadiums).
- This conversion was paid for by Sport Lottery money and Manchester City Council.
- The stadium was also fitted out by Manchester City FC in the year following the Games and branded with Manchester City livery and billboards, as well as catering and function suites.

ii) Manchester City were given a 200 year lease on the stadium, securing them a new, state-of-the-art home for minimal capital investment on their part, but at huge cost to Sport England's Lottery Fund. The club took occupancy in June 2003.

iii) In return for this public investment, Manchester City Council was given ownership of the Maine Road ground in the deprived ward of Moss Side. This, as we shall see below, has attracted significant criticism as well as disputes about the value of the site to the council.

iv) MCFC also entered into an attendance-linked rent arrangement with the Council to secure the lease. This agreement is as follows, with the council earning:

- 50% of ticket revenue when the numbers of tickets sold is between 32,000 (the capacity of Maine road at the time of the deal) and 40,000;
- 60% of ticket revenue on tickets sold between 40,000 and 48,000. (PMP 2003)

We have asked both Manchester City Council and Sport England to confirm the amount of revenue that this agreement has earned the local authority in the first season. However, neither organisation has been able to provide us with these details to date.

v) Sport England are to receive 86% of the proceeds of the Maine Road redevelopment and of the proceeds of the auction of memorabilia from Maine Road. ('Maine Road Storm', [Manchester Online](#), 24 May 2003)

vi) Also, MCFC had to agree with Manchester City Council and Sport England a 'Community Use Plan' for the stadium, which allows 130 days of 'community use' of parts of the stadium. The plan includes:

- A Series of local sports events, finals etc. amounting to 'not less than' 15 days' use of the pitch
- Sports coached education
- Football development meetings
- Annual conference about the regeneration
- Annual jobs fair
- Bi-annual health event
- Parents day
- Annual 'Beacons Day' - local community group usage
- Community social functions
- General community meetings
- Training

(Sport City and City of Manchester Stadium: Community Use Plan, Manchester City Council 2003)

Official discourses have sought to explain or justify this arrangement, by citing the need for an ongoing and regular user of the stadium, but also by citing the stadium itself as the central element within the Sportcity site and the catalytic element for the regeneration of East Manchester. Sportcity itself includes:

- City of Manchester Stadium
- Indoor tennis centre
- National Squash Centre
- Outdoor athletics track with 6000 capacity stand
- Indoor athletics facility
- Sports hall
- Sports science and medicine facilities
- English Institute of Sport

As we discussed in our second report, East Manchester has suffered significant deprivation in recent times, including: a collapse in the traditional manufacturing base with a 60% employment loss 1975-85; a 13% population loss in the 1990s; and a collapse in its housing market. This has resulted in 20% of properties being vacant, a very low skills base; high crime, poor health, poor community and retail facilities; a fragile economic base where 52% of households receive benefit and where there is 12% unemployment; and generally poor infrastructure and physical environment.

3.1 Access, Decision Making and Management

Due to the fact that the stadium development was part of a much broader strategy for the regeneration of East Manchester, both the handover and the subsequent use of the stadium are subject to what is probably a unique governance structure for the local area around a professional football club in this country. As we have outlined, New East Manchester Ltd are the Urban Regeneration Company (URC) with overall responsibility for the area and developments within it. Its board is made up of the following:

- two directors from the City Council

- two directors from the RDA (North West Development Agency)
- two directors from English Partnerships
- three community representatives
- Tom Russell, NEM Chief Executive (and former Deputy Chief Executive of Manchester City Council).

Tom Russell has described the role of the URC as primarily about undertaking the physical regeneration of the area and attracting private investment:

The regeneration framework that we've developed has to be relatively simple, legible, understandable, not just to those working for the URC but to the 30,000 residents of East Manchester and the wide range of other partners.... We have to be responsive... but it's very important that we hold fast to those key simple straightforward principles which underpin the regeneration vision for the area... We have particular responsibilities for leading on the physical regeneration of East Manchester, and linked to that we have a particular responsibility for marketing and promoting the area for investment. Ultimately, it does all depend on the private sector coming in, looking at what's happening in East Manchester and concluding that they can invest in the area and make a return on that investment (Russell, T 2002).

In conjunction with these, there are two other key regeneration agencies: The New Deal for Communities; and the East Manchester Sport Action Zone.

New Deal for Communities has been established by the Government to improve the most deprived areas of the country. There are four key areas which the programme will seek to address:

- tackling unemployment
- improving health
- tackling crime, and
- raising educational achievement

A further £25 million over seven years was secured from SRB Round 5 which helped form the BEACONS for a Brighter Future project also in Beswick, Clayton and Openshaw. This was to ensure that 'those parts of Openshaw and Beswick excluded from the New Deal for Communities programme, due to restrictions in the size of the area, will be the focus of complimentary activity. The nearby neighbourhood of Clayton will also benefit from the initiative.'

<http://www.manchesterupdate.org.uk/article23.htm>

The East Manchester Sport Action Zone (EMSAZ) covers the areas of Beswick, Clayton and Openshaw, jointly funded by Sport England (National Lottery) and New Deal for Communities (NDC) with the SAZ Manager, John Dwan based at the NDC in Beswick. This is the same area as the Beacons for a Brighter Future SRB regeneration initiative and the NDC. The EMSAZ aims to 'provide an effective and sustainable sporting infrastructure for inner city areas' and to 'ensure that the local community derives maximum benefit from world class sporting facilities in the area', with five years' funding from Sport England. It further aims to:

- increase participation and reduce inequalities in sports and leisure provision

- support PE and extra curricular sport in East Manchester Education Action Zone schools
 - co-ordinate and develop sports clubs and community groups across the area
 - improve and ensure community access to existing and future facilities
- (http://www.eastserve.com/opencms/opencms/Sport/Sports_Action_Zone/index.html)

Working alongside the Sport Action Zone is also, of course, the City Council's principal sport and leisure facilitator, Manchester Leisure, which is involved in delivering Manchester's strategic plan for sport across the city and, with the development of East Manchester, particularly in that area.

Alongside these are a range of forums and community representative organisations. These include the East Manchester Residents Forum, a consultative group of 54 residents groups, established with the New Deal for Communities; and the East Manchester Community Forum. The EMCF is an umbrella organisation seeking to support residents' associations, activities for people in East Manchester, initiatives targeted at certain populations (black and minority ethnic groups, OAPs, the young), and act as a link with regeneration organisations such as the New Deal for Communities and New East Manchester. It does, however, have a wider geographical remit than the NDC.

3.2 Sportcity and New East Manchester Deliverables

Sportcity itself - rather than the wider regeneration schemes - will achieve, according to the City Council and New East Manchester Ltd:

- The Reclamation of a 146 acre brown field site
- The Attraction of £120m investment from Sports Lottery funds
- The attraction of 4.5 million visitors
- The creation of 3,500 jobs directly and indirectly.

Manchester City Council, have, since winning the bid to host the Commonwealth Games, attracted a range of regeneration funds and schemes to the East Manchester area. These include:

- £52 million New Deal for Communities funding
- £25 million of improvement money through the SRB5
- SureStart initiative of £3 million to aid pre-school children
- New Deal for Communities
- Education Action Zone
- Health Action Zone
- Sports Action Zone
- Ancoats Urban Village
- Objective 2 Funding
- Sure Start

In this, they can arguably justifiably claim that the Games, and Sportcity, have been the catalyst and focal point for one of the largest attempts at urban regeneration in the country. The actual outcome of this process remains to be seen, but the size of the ambitions of this regeneration, which is now 4 years into a 10 year process, should not be underestimated:

- Double the population to 60,000 over 10/15 yrs
- Build up to 12,500 new homes
- Improve 7,000 existing homes
- Create a 160 hectare business park
- Provide the £100 million Sportcity complex
- Create a new town centre with a 120,000 sq ft retail
- Integrated public transport system
- New regional park system
- Educational attainment above the city average

Much of this remains to be borne out and we are not in a position to say whether it will or will not meet its aims. However, it is clear that such approaches and claims are similar to other examples of municipal stadium building and associated schemes, particularly in the United States, where ‘civic boosterism’ and urban regeneration are the justifications for financing such facilities through public money. (Smith and Ingham 2003; Spirou and Bennett 2003; Gratton and Henry (eds.) 2001). What is perhaps different in this context is that this is one of the first times that a football stadium development has played such a central role in regeneration schemes in a major UK city, although, of course, Cardiff’s Millennium Stadium, a multi-sport site, is also a major football venue.

As such, for the first time, the roles and responsibilities with regard to the ongoing social and economic regeneration of an English inner city have been placed on a professional football club, through the Lottery Agreement between Sport England and Manchester City Council, and the subsequent Community Use Plan between Manchester City Council and Manchester City Football Club (which was a condition of the Lottery Agreement). The effect which this has on the relationship between that club and its new and former locales, as well as what this implies for relationships between clubs and their communities, will be the major issue dealt with in the following sections.

3.3 Alternative Discourses on Sport and Regeneration

It should be noted that - as in many US and other examples - the process by which sport, and football in particular, has become involved in these regeneration initiatives and has benefited from public expenditure, has not been without its critics. As we have seen, some in the athletic community have not been happy at losing a state of the art athletics stadium to the dominant sport in the country, football. Also, there were concerns expressed privately within Sport England that so much of their Lottery budget was allocated to one city and one area (Brown 2001). Football can rightly consider itself a significant beneficiary of a process which essentially centred around a non-football, multi-sport event.

Critiques of the deal by which this happened - particularly because the end users are a private sports organisation, Manchester City Football Club - have come from a number of sources.

In August 2001 Sports Minister Richard Cabourn heavily criticised the stadium deal, arguing that it ‘was not the best use of money for sport’ and that the ‘government had been “short changed” over the [Commonwealth] Games’. One of his complaints was

that Manchester City could have been forced to leave a running track, therefore maintaining an alternative use of the stadium as an athletics venue. This was countered by both the football club - who said that they 'would never ask our fans to watch football in a ground surrounded by an athletics track' - and the City Council - who believed that the Minister was trying to find a solution to staging the World Athletics Championship. However, the Minister maintained that the contract between the two 'beg[s] the question whether that is the best use of government money for sport.' (Manchester Online 10 August 2001)

This is a criticism which has been echoed by others. In the media it has been alleged that the end use of a publicly funded stadium should not be given, potentially free of charge (should attendances at MCFC fall below the 32,000 threshold for ticket revenue sharing), to a publicly listed company, part of which is owned by Rupert Murdoch's BSKyB:

serious questions remain, about how far sporting infrastructure can help areas out of decline, and about the specific deals the council is striking.... there appears to be little rigorous public scrutiny of how the benefits balance, and the value the public is getting for its money. (D Conn 2000: 'Sharks feed from City's new stadium Independent, 7 December 2000):

The element of the deal by which Sport England can 'claw back' some of the capital expenditure on the stadium through the redevelopment of the Maine Road site has also faced some local criticism. This is because it was felt by some that expenditure initially targeted at the North West, and Manchester in particular, in the shape of the stadium investment was being given back to be spent across England by Sport England, with one local councillor arguing that 'this is missing money that should be spent in Manchester rather than going back to Sport England.' (Manchester Online 24 May 2003).

Indeed, in the run-up to the Games itself, the overall development of facilities was criticised because it was alleged that investment by the local authority in the new facilities was resulting in other local and grassroots sports facilities being closed. This included the 'Gorton Tub' swimming pool in East Manchester (but outside the regeneration area). The campaign around that closure achieved national awareness at the time. Campaigners claimed that 'budgets for local sports facilities have been slashed to fund the event' and began a 'poster campaign with the slogan "Commonwealth Games: Sponsored by the Closure of Local Sports Facilities"', something denied by the council. (Regeneration and Renewal 22 November 2001)

Other dissenting voices have illustrated that however much the rhetoric of regenerators and also the football club may portray a community united behind such a process - and there may be considerable, even majority, support for it - the divided nature of Manchester's football culture means that this can never be complete. As has been written elsewhere, some Manchester United fans from East Manchester:

reported a collective understanding to refer to [the stadium] as 'Johnson's Wireworks' - a reference to the large factory which stood on or near the site... As recently as September 2003, the United fanzine *Red Issue* (No.69) enclosed a mock rent book for the tenants of the city's newest 'Council House', by then

the commonly accepted term of abuse for CoMS.... It is notable that at times the use of 'Wireworks' displays a nostalgia for the past, in line with these fans' nostalgia for their 'golden age' of football. However, this is contingent and at times it is also a pejorative term belittling the new stadium as a dirty factory. The use of 'council house' picks up on common vernaculars demeaning those who don't own their own house and these also therefore contrast with institutional discourses of social inclusion. Such symbolic contestations and playful tactics might be seen as counter-hegemonic in challenging the prevailing vernacular and local policy. They provide an alternative narrative to the dominant discourses promoting civic pride about the development. (Brown 2004b)

In some ways these have been the most public and vocal of critiques and, whilst somewhat playful, do suggest the limits of institutional attempts to define the areas for debate. For instance, even the naming of the stands at the stadium have been the subject of attempts at sabotage by rival fans in the city (we return to this issue in 5.3, below). Perhaps more seriously, there has been little public or political debate, but considerable amounts of information and rhetoric from those steering the area's regeneration, about the strategy being pursued. Not only is there a weak political opposition in Manchester City Council, a point highlighted by Conn (2000: op cit), but some details, particularly over the finance of the stadium deal, have only emerged piecemeal and others are closely guarded.

This is not to say that the strategy is right or wrong - something which can only be borne out in time and through further research - but that there has been little public discussion about it at a city level, despite considerable 'consultation' exercises and information dissemination in East Manchester itself. A number of journalists have complained that the council were obstructive and reticent in providing information; and some academics have been attacked in the press for merely posing questions about the stadium deal (Brown 2001; MCC 2001; Brown 2001b).

These differing viewpoints are to some extent to be expected and they highlight the difficulties in delivering a regeneration strategy, based around a stadium whose long term occupant is a football club, in such an area.

4. Moving Grounds: The Management of the Stadium Move

4.1 Practicalities

Moving a football club from one ground to another of course entails many of the same issues as moving any other medium sized company. However, it also involves issues unique to football/sport; and in this case also problems associated with the particularities of the context in which this new stadium has been built.

Pete Bradshaw was appointed as Project Manager for Manchester City to oversee the stadium move in January 2003, four months after the Commonwealth Games staff had moved off the stadium site, and six months before Manchester City Football Club were to take occupancy. Much of his role involved making sure that the fit out of the stadium for the football club took place according to their wishes, ensuring that the proper services, licences, and issues of planning were in place in time. This included, for instance, organising the tender and completion of 16 different service contracts, covering matters such as telecoms, furniture and electrical items.

However, his role also involved being a representative of the club in meetings, negotiations and planning with both contractors (Laing) and Manchester City Council. In many respects the three organisations worked closely together on a daily basis, but the club also held formal meetings every other day; along with formal weekly meetings with Sara Billington (now operations manager at MCFC) who managed the project from the Maine Road end; and fortnightly or monthly meetings involving a wider group of partners in the project.

Many of the issues involved in the move were similar to those associated with any big stadium redevelopment or move: planning, logistics, transport etc. However, the fact that this was a development led by the City Council and funded largely by Lottery money meant that there were additional considerations. Although negotiations between the club and the Council were at an advanced stage by the start of 2003, some details had still to be finalised, such as the precise nature of the 'community use' of the stadium. Also of course, whereas normally a club moving to a new ground would be involved in the construction process from the outset, here the club became involved in a detailed way in construction and fit out only towards the end of the process, and after the first major use of the stadium - the Commonwealth Games - had finished.

Bradshaw argues that one of the lessons for clubs going through a similar process is that they should be involved at an earlier stage over issues such as fit out, and the provision of services within the stadium (such as data points, electricity supply, lighting etc.), although he recognises that this could be problematic:

I suppose with the benefit of hindsight, some of that detailed fit out should have really been done before the Games as it would be much more cost-effective for everybody concerned. But equally I would have thought that possibly three years or so before moving here it might have been difficult to push not too much detail into these plans because the world changes and

technology changes... We wouldn't have known what we're going to put in the ticket office for example. It is also difficult for the contractor who has been involved for seven years to have a new organisation to deal with and project manager who has only been here for two of three days telling them that they were doing it wrong. In fairness they got on with it and we had a very good relationship. (PB Interview 2004)

It is also the case that apart from some details relating to the fit out (replacement of radiators and mullions) there were few major problems and contractors finished on time for the club to move in, in June 2003.

However what is also unusual in this case is that not only had one organisation (Manchester City Council) been responsible for building the stadium and another (Manchester City Football Club) responsible for its fit out, but it was also a fairly unique case where an athletics facility was being converted to a football stadium. We have already mentioned that the athletics track was to be removed, a permanent end built to replace the temporarily north stand, and the pitch lowered to allow the building of an extra tier of seats (paid for and undertaken by the Council). In many ways this merely reflected the desire of MCFC to have a stadium where the crowd is close to the pitch - a feature of English football in particular - and the norm in football in this country to have single use stadia. This contrasts with many experiences on the continent, where multi-use athletics/football stadia are often the norm.

Apart from the criticisms which we have already mentioned about England 'losing' a new athletics facility, the other major concern for the football club was the roof. Designed on a model which had been adapted from the Sydney 2000 Olympic stadium, the City of Manchester Stadium had a 'floating' roof with a gap between the bottom of the roof and the top of the stands. Once representatives of the football club experienced the stadium during the winter months, they realised that this gap would allow considerable amounts of rainfall to come into the stand, especially in the prevailing westerly wind which Manchester often experiences. Such a design feature clearly did not take account of local conditions enough and was not an issue during the Commonwealth Games which were staged in the summer months. However, it was clearly going to be a problem for a football crowd in Manchester in the winter. This problem was resolved by the council.

Again, the lesson for the future is that the end user of the facility - in this case a football club - needs to be involved at an earlier, design stage, of the process, especially if the venue is to be used for one purpose first, and another later.

Another unique feature of the set up in Sportcity is that the football club takes on some of the responsibility for the upkeep of the whole site, along with those that manage the other venues at Sportcity. A Sportcity management 'shadow' company was established with two football club representatives and two City Council representatives. This manages the common domain within Sportcity, with costs shared between partners. Once other commercial development takes place on the site, the developers will also share some of the burden. Although there were obligations on the football club to clear up the area of Maine Road owned by them, this is the first time a common domain has become their part-responsibility, although by far the biggest impact in terms of litter will be from the football club. There is little evidence of other

joint initiatives between the sports venues on the site, although club officials were keen to stress that an ongoing monitoring of the management of Sportcity meant that such things could develop given time.

4.2 ‘Community Use’: Pitch and Stadium

4.2.1 Pitch

The other major issue, which is specific to this case study, was the agreement over the community use of the stadium, which we outlined above, yet the details of which were not finalised until the run-up to the handover to Manchester City. As we outlined in Section 2, the Lottery agreement and planning consent included 15 days use of the pitch a year by ‘the community’ for things such as schools finals etc. During subsequent negotiations this part of the community use plan was revised and agreement was reached that such finals would take place on the adjacent Regional Athletics Arena which now has a 6,000 capacity stand built from ‘surpluses’ from the Commonwealth Games budgets.

This change was accounted for by one club official as follows:

there were agreements... for the community to be able to use the pitch , and you can't just say the community can just use the pitch. There was a requirement for 15 times a year, and that's nearly as much as the first team use the pitch. The cost of that, and the damage that that could cause, was prohibitive, so we agreed we would need to limit the use of the pitch and compensate with additional uses of other areas really which are much more relevant to the local community.... In fairness I don't see that in social terms it does a great deal: so you might get some people who have played on the pitch - it means very, very little, there'd never be a crowd there to watch them, you know it's not that relevant, there's a falseness about it. Whereas some of the very real needs about community use, we could expand some of those and the use of rooms, of educational development and some of the health issues that were trying to deal with and make those things much more real and relevant. (Interview, 2004)

In this we can see both the financial limits and constraints which can be placed on ‘community use’ as well as a desire on the part of the club to meet what they see - rather than what those who originally drafted the plan saw - as ‘community needs’. Indeed, this quote does not reflect the iconic status which a Premier League football pitch in a new stadium may have, or that any clubs’ pitch has for its fans. As Bale has argued, stadiums can be viewed as ‘cathedrals’ where ‘communities’ of fans come to ‘worship’ their team (Bale 2000). For many, such ‘community’ or youth matches will be the only chance they will ever get to perform in that environment; and the fact that a stadium is empty does not necessarily diminish its appeal - as stadium tours and the importance that MCFC fans put on visiting the stadium before it was even in use illustrate. Furthermore, Maine Road was continuing to be used after its official ‘end’ for charity and corporate matches involving fans, and the fact that it was empty did not diminish its importance to those people. The cost of the use of the main pitch is perhaps a more reasonable justification for this change.

However, this quote also does suggest a desire on the part of the club to actively engage with issues of deprivation in the area, above the symbolic importance of

playing on the pitch. What is not clear, is the role which the local community - residents associations, community groups, individual local people - played in any of these decision-making processes. This in part reflects the decision-making framework in the regeneration process which has been established in East Manchester.

More worryingly, we have heard recently that although the intention was for the nearby Regional Arena athletics facility to be a substitute for use of the main pitch, Manchester City have now identified that as the venue for their reserve team matches. At the present time the extent of community use for the athletics arena grass pitch is unclear, and Manchester Leisure who manage the facility, appear to have indicated that no community sports events should take place on the pitch because of potential damage to the surface. This ruling appears to also apply to regular use for field athletics (javelin, hammer, discuss) such as that by Sale Harriers, although major finals will still take place there. As such, it appears that no pitch at the stadium or at Sportcity at all is to be made available for 'community use'.

For example, recently, an event of summer games was organised for young people from all the New Deal for Communities areas in the North West, combining tennis, football, tag Rugby, duathlon, golf and cricket. The event organisers, Greater Sport working on behalf of the North West Sports network of NDC projects and chaired by Government Office North West, were informed two weeks before the event date that the pitch was now not to be used for the event (after 6 months planning) as it was to be used by Manchester City's reserves. This resulted in some events taking place at the Arena but not football and rugby, for which participants had to be bussed to another site. One organiser said 'it spoils the event, really'. The matter remains unresolved and clarity of use needs to be addressed. Local agencies are also keen to ensure that the potential to use the main pitch itself, where appropriate, remains in the Community Use plan.

4.2.2 Stadium

The Community Use Plan between Manchester City Council and Manchester City Football Club is part of the Lottery Funding Agreement under which Sport England financed the project. As such it is subject to annual approval by Sport England. This usage plan is also overseen and reviewed through:

- An annual review of usage every May/June
- An annual consultation exercise undertaken through the East Manchester Residents' Forum

(Sportcity and City of Manchester Stadium Community Use Plan, MCC, 11 June 2003)

There are some notable features of the management of the Community Use Plan for the stadium which we wish to highlight here. The first is that the club do not, themselves, negotiate with or manage those wishing to gain access to the stadium on one of the '130 days' designated for community use. This is operated through NDC in a process whereby groups wishing to use a facility - for example a meeting room - apply to NDC who then, if they approve, book the facility through the football club's Conference and Banqueting department. Not only does this place a degree of separation between the club and the community organisation, it allows an agency to perform the role of a 'gate keeper' who 'will agree and communicate appropriate

bookings' with MCFC (*op cit* 11 June 2003). MCFC have responsibility for operational requirements.

This has not been without criticism and some community representatives, however supportive of the overall attempts to regenerate the area and positive about MCFC's presence there, have argued that the football club itself has so far had minimal direct contact with community groups and residents.

This can raise problems for the *perception*, if not necessarily the *reality*, of the role of the club in the local area. Also, leaders of one community organisation told us that they felt this might disadvantage some community organisations which may be outside the New Deal for Communities area because of the 'gate-keeping' role that NDC plays. NDC have assured us that this is not the case and that, although they might exclude community groups from elsewhere in Manchester as these are not the target beneficiaries of the deal, no legitimate community groups from East Manchester, a geographical area which they define flexibly, have been or will be excluded.

A second issue is that the Community Use plan for the stadium included suggestions for use of facilities for conferences by the local authority and its associated agencies themselves. This appears to be a very organisational definition of which 'communities' get to use the stadium, and re-emphasises the more instrumental relationship between the club and 'community', rather than a more organic and rooted relationship with local people and organisations.

The first annual review of the Community Use Plan is currently taking place (August 2004). Whilst all parties recognise that it is a 'learning process' and that on the whole it has operated well, some significant issues have been highlighted. These include:

- Some early problems with rooms used - a lack of temperature control (too hot or too cold) and a lack of suitable equipment (no screens, inappropriate seating) when executive boxes have been used for meetings. This has resulted in at least one training course being relocated elsewhere next year.
- Problems with the behaviour of one local high school which has resulted in a request from the club that the event organisers pay for stewarding, a cost implication which NDC hopes to ameliorate with the use of local volunteers.
- A 'monopoly' situation regarding the provision of catering, which has to be purchased through the club's own caterers and which is proving prohibitively expensive for many groups. (Review of Sportcity and City of Manchester Stadium Use (Draft), NDC, August 2004)

The later issue is the most serious, because it threatens the very viability of the use of the stadium for many community groups. Although there are positive comments about the staff at the stadium, there have been a number of complaints from groups who have used the stadium, about the catering cost, quality, amount and timing of service, with a number of users saying that they would not use the stadium again as a result. One community group told us that with a price of £4 per sandwich, they 'hoped that Keegan and Anelka were buttering the bread themselves!' Another is reported as having paid £12.15 per head for catering, for 150 people over 2 days, a total cost of £3,654, with no option to provide or source their own catering.

This is a fundamental issue because if catering is provided at this level of cost it will render meaningless the provision of 130 days' use of the stadium for many groups and events. Furthermore, this level of cost, which is what any other user would be charged, including profit-making private businesses, presumably provides (indirectly or directly) a profit to both the catering company and the club. Thus the community use of the stadium is being used by the club to make money from catering: is this community use or use of the community? We are told that this issue is being addressed and that the club are investigating whether a reduced 'community rate' can be applied to use by local groups.

4.2.3 Management

The Community Use Plan states that it was 'prepared... following widespread community consultation'. Whilst this is no doubt the case, some of the groups to whom we have spoken in the area said that they were not involved. This reflects a more general concern with 'community consultation', in that this tends to take place, if at all, through consultants and other third party organisations; and can often be with residents' association representatives, and others, who do not necessarily fully represent the diverse community interests in the area: something we highlighted as a concern in our second report. Ongoing consultations do, however, take place between the club and NEM, NDC, SAZ and the Residents Forum. The lack of direct engagement between the club and other community organisations, before or since the move, is perhaps a concern which needs to be addressed.

This is an important emerging issue about football's relationships with its communities, and is not something by any means unique to Manchester City, or Sportcity. We use this merely as an illustrative example of the problems clubs have engaging with the myriad of different 'versions' of community, and the wide variety of individuals and organisations - especially in a regeneration context - which may exist in an area. Establishing a more organic and rooted relationship would involve, in our view, clubs, agencies and local authorities taking a different conceptualisation of their roles as community organisations.

Clearly this is not easy, especially for a type of organisation which is not used to operating in this way. Football, like some other cultural sectors (e.g. music industry, Brown, Cohen and O'Connor 1998), has relatively little track record of involvement in the regeneration or economic development strategies of local authorities. Also, the situation Manchester City are in is unique and club officials, local agency representatives and community representatives have stressed that it is a learning process in which different approaches may develop over time. However, on the face of it the 'community use' of the stadium does not suggest an embedded organic relationship with the local communities but a more institutionalised one.

4.3 A New Community Strategy

The mixed motivations for the club to be involved in community development in this context are highlighted in the following quotes from a club official to whom we spoke early in 2004. The first reflects the rhetoric of what Manchester City *is*:

We've landed in this community, we've jointly built this monolith of a stadium that's arguably an iconic monolith, that could mean something to local people

in a positive sense, that it's part of them, that even if they're not interested in football, they're equally excited by its presence. Or we could build that fence round it and lock the gate and say "well it's nothing to do with you lot, go about your business and don't bother us". That's not what we are, it's not who we are, and genuinely 100% of the directors and the staff that work here by and large, want to be an organisation that makes a difference, we want to be a good neighbour, and seen as a good neighbour. (Interview 2004)

The second suggests a more proactive role for the club in reinvigorating and benefiting the local 'community':

If we did [the development of the stadium] without the other [community] stuff then... there would be something very serious missing. Part of our work is making sure that local people can get jobs in those shops and that hotel, make sure they have the skills to do that, being the go-betweens to a certain extent... (Interview 2004)

However, the third reflects what are called by this official more 'selfish' or practical reasons for engaging with the local community, as well as some telling impressions (and either fear or a recognition of reality, depending on your view) of that community:

If we just keep importing people, [then] the disaffected people... on the council estate across the road, will start throwing bricks at our cars that are parked in the car park, and disrupting our, you know our people who have paid big money to be hospitality guests. They'll start daubing paint all over the walls and before you know it we'll be building fences around the stadium, and we'll get a reputation – "well don't drive your car there 'cos it gets broken into by the local scrotes across the road". We can't necessarily stop all that happening, and so far it doesn't happen but, if we ignore our local community, we ignore it potentially at our peril, and they'll treat us badly if we treat them badly. And I think we've got to be seen to be, you know purely from a selfish point of view to stop those things happening we've got to do something. (Interview 2004)

Whatever the motivations, the club have used their move to the new stadium to renew and reinvigorate their Community Strategy under Pete Bradshaw who moved from project manager of the stadium to Manager of Social Responsibility and Special Projects. It is clear that the move of stadium was taken as an opportunity to review the club's roles:

What we've done with the move here, which is largely because they wanted to do it, but equally there is a percentage that was required in the planning consent, is they've had to really review how we do community, and what it means to be good neighbour and so on. This is what really has brought about the review of City In the Community and its work, not only of City and its community but the other areas of community outreach really, which are now being brought together under a brand new department. It's being generally looked at as social responsibility development really, which looks at things like City In The Community, the future of Platt Lane and its relationship in that part of Manchester, the relationship to the academy, the Blue Zone after school

learning centre and so on. And there's a whole range of other things which also includes the future development of the Sportcity site, so there is some hard solid stuff in there as well. (PB Interview 2004)

It is interesting to note that this new Community Strategy refocuses the club's community work in line with wider developments about the 'corporate social responsibility' of companies, something which also reflects the changes brought about in the club on the back of the stadium move, which we describe later as a move from 'old City' to 'new City'. However, whilst this is the case, the special nature of it being a *football club's* social responsibility, rather than any other kind of company, is reflected in the following two quotes:

They [the board] could actually turn around and say "why do we bother, why do we give ourselves a headache of a problem of worrying about our social responsibility? Sod it we're a business at the end of the day, we've got to survive, there's a chemical company across the road that don't worry about what goes on on the street, and they lock the gate and go home at the end of the night". Why don't the board just do that and stop worrying?"

'They realise that in the industry that they're dealing with, it isn't all mercenary, isn't all manufactured... the business we're in is about the lives of people, and whilst the results we deliver sometimes in terms of our major end product can be disappointing, I think the overall business is about... lifting life above the norm, and even when we've got disappointing results on the pitch and the team play badly, here is a sounding board were people can whinge they can swear... (PB Interview 2004)

This perhaps is a recognition by the club of the onus, which we have referred to elsewhere, that is placed upon football clubs which is not commonly placed on other sectors of business, and indeed other sports, to anything like the same degree.

As we outlined more fully in our second report, the move to the new stadium provided the club with an opportunity to rethink and redesign its community operations. To achieve this task Pete Bradshaw drew up a new club community strategy (Blue: Print) for the period 2004-2009. This strategy indicates MCFC's move to a much more directed approach in its community work.

The strategy outlines the club's priority themes for community work over the next five years, including:

1. Football development
2. Health
3. Education
4. Regeneration
5. Crime, drugs and safer communities

In each of these areas, the club has outlined its focus of work, and in most cases has also identified the geographical areas in which it will launch interventions.

1. Football development - continue city-wide programmes. The club aims to become the lead agency for football development in Manchester through a

- new partnership with the Manchester County Football Association and Manchester City Council.
2. Health - East Manchester and Wythenshawe as well as rolling out into the Moss Side area through the use of MCFC's Platt Lane Training Complex. MCFC says it will work with partners such as the North and South Manchester Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) and local Health Action Zones (HAZ) on Coronary Heart Disease (CHD) and health promotion information around breast cancer, bowel cancer, sexual health, and Type 2 (late onset) diabetes.
 3. Education - named schools in Gorton North, Gorton South, Ardwick, Blackley and Hulme; work with the Manchester College of Arts and Technology (MANCAT) at its campuses across Manchester; and a desire to expand education activities into the district of Tameside.
 4. Regeneration - working closely with partners in East Manchester (most notably New Deal for Communities and New East Manchester Ltd). The strategy notes the centrality of the City of Manchester Stadium in particular, and the Sportcity site in general, to the regeneration of the New East Manchester area of the city and says that it will contribute, through its education policy, to the 'skilling' of local people in order that they can benefit from new local jobs.
 5. Crime, drugs and safer communities - city-wide across Manchester, although at times - in conjunction with education and health initiatives - may be more closely geographically targeted. The club will work in partnership with Greater Manchester Police (GMP), Connexions, the probation service and NACRO.

4.4 The Stadium Move and the Supporters

The final element of the practicalities of the stadium move concerns how the move of supporters, and in particular season ticket holders, was handled. As we have outlined in our second report, different 'micro supporter communities' come together on match day before, during and after games. The differences in these communities - in terms of their modes of participation as fans in particular - can be observed clearly on match days. This was certainly the case at Maine Road where, for instance, you could observe the more passionate and vocal support coming from the lower northern corner of the Kippax stand, as well as from the Kippax end of the North stand. It is no coincidence that these were the areas closest to the away fans' section and they contrasted sharply to the more sedate, middle-class and older fans who sat for instance in the Main Stand. Such observations can be related to attempts at defining different kinds of football supporter (Giulianotti 2002), different constituencies of football fans and the differences of small collectives of fans within the wider supporter communities.

Although we will deal with the effect of the stadium move on supporters in the next sections, it is noteworthy that the club made considerable attempts to maintain some of these micro communities within the process of moving stadiums. Documentation was sent with renewal letters to season ticket holders ahead of the final season at Maine Road which offered the following:

- the opportunity to buy season tickets for both the 2002/03 season (at Maine Road) and 2003/04 season (at CoMS) at the same price
- a low interest payment scheme

- a map of the new ground illustrating where equivalent seats would be given to supporters

This latter point attempted to ‘transplant’ stands and seating arrangements from Maine Road to the new stands at the CoMS. This can be seen as both easier for the club - ‘The alternative would have been to have everybody come down to the ticket stall at Maine Road, 18 months before, whilst the stadium was still being built and tried to accommodate everyone’s wishes - “my mate sits next to me, he’s not come down today but can he come down tomorrow and he wants to sit next to me”.... you couldn’t have done 36,000 transactions on that basis’ (IH Interview, 2004); as well as an attempt to preserve those small groupings of fans which existed at Maine Road - ‘the fans who were near the away support at Maine Road are still near the away support because they enjoyed the atmosphere that that creates’ (*ibid*).

Fans were also offered the chance to change location where possible; to view their new seats before the start of the 2003/04 season at a ‘fans open day’; and to request changes in location for the following (current) season. Certainly such a strategy was welcomed by supporters at the time, as was the stadium move itself. Indeed, one effect of the stadium move was to allow many more Manchester City supporters to watch the team, with an increase in season ticket numbers from around 25,000 to 36,000; something which satisfied a level of unfulfilled demand, and an increase in number of match-by-match tickets. We will deal with access to tickets for local people in our assessment of the impact of the move on supporter communities.

The positive reaction to this process of transference from Maine Road was reflected by Manchester City supporters in positive comments to us, on Internet sites and discussion lists, as well as in one poll which suggested that over 90% of MCFC supporters favoured moving grounds (The Observer, Sunday February 17, 2002). We will deal more fully with the ongoing reaction of supporters to the stadium move in the next section.

5. Impacts and Implications: Residents, Businesses and Fans and the Stadium Move

5.1 The Effects of the Stadium Move on the Maine Road Area

5.1.1 Maine Road Residents

The research team has been interested in charting the effects of MCFC's stadium move on local residents in the area around the Maine Road stadium. We have interviewed and observed residents' organisation members, 'ordinary' residents, local councillors, regeneration agencies and other groups to gather information on a range of issues. These include: the history of relations between residents and MCFC; the effects of the redevelopment of Maine Road on residents in the 1990s; community consultation around the ground move; the management of the ground move; and ongoing plans for the redevelopment of the Maine Road site.

Historical Relationships

In our second interim report, the research team commented on the history of relations between the residents of Moss Side (and neighbouring areas) and MCFC. In summary, it was suggested that the relationship was 'mixed', and that many residents, whilst having enjoyed their area's association with MCFC, did not always regard the club to be a particularly good neighbour. This relationship is worth considering again briefly as it forms the basis for many residents' views on MCFC's departure from Maine Road, and their hopes for future usage of the stadium site.

When interviewed about the relationship between MCFC and its local area, most residents drew attention to two central issues: the pride that they felt from living close to a major sport stadium; and the nuisance that the operations of the football club could cause for local people, especially on match days. These ambivalent feelings towards MCFC were summed up by one resident:

It's been a very mixed history. On the one hand, some residents would talk about the huge disruption that it's caused them. People living just down the road from here, every fortnight they'd get huge amounts of disruption in terms of access to their properties ... But then of course people were also very proud of having the stadium in their midst. You know, an area [Moss Side] with a 'reputation' and not a very good reputation in the media, I think that people did feel that every fortnight it was the focus of some kind of national focus – and people had a lot of pride in that (Maine Road Resident, Interview, October 2003)

This resident's comments were shared by many others. Large numbers of residents spoke of the excitement of match days, even if they were not football supporters. They testified to enjoying and sharing in the 'atmosphere' of MCFC's matches, and of appreciating the colour and spectacle that large crowds brought to the area. A few residents also reflected on the importance of MCFC matches in delivering a different 'image' of Moss Side to people who would otherwise only know the area through media discourses and representations as one blighted by gun crime and violence:

It reminded us all that we're a very vibrant, friendly community. And people were coming in, being welcomed. There were food stalls, lots of 'bonhomie' around the streets, little or no trouble really from an area which was always associated with problems and difficulties and guns and violence, you know. Yet people came quite happily and left their cars down the streets and I don't think there was a disproportionate amount of theft or vandalism. So in that sense I think it did a lot for the image of the community and I think that people liked that because it felt like we were part of something bigger. And I'm a big believer in that whole thing about large group experiences which I think are fairly unique, and even just approaching the ground and being part of that crowd walking down towards the ground you got this sense of excitement and belonging to something. And talking to strangers, which by-and-large doesn't happen otherwise really, happened. (Maine Road Resident, Interview, October 2003)

In addition to the 'positive' effects of MCFC's residence at Maine Road, many residents also spoke of their dissatisfaction with the club over its attitude to engage with local people over issues of match day nuisance. A number of residents' organisation members stated that they had approached MCFC on a number of occasions during the 1990s to discuss match-day issues, but had been met with 'unhelpful' responses. One resident stated:

People were really hacked off with the club who didn't appear to really give a damn about people who lived near by ... who paid about 4 hours to council cleaners to clean up after them despite having this huge turnover. And this is what caused the strong feeling when people started talking about the future of the stadium. (Maine Road Resident, Interview, November 2003)

Another recalled a story of writing to MCFC for assistance with the removal of local graffiti:

We once wrote to them. There was a mass outbreak of graffiti relating to the football club. And we wrote to them telling them that the council won't clean it up because its not racist or offensive, so would they pay anything towards cleaning it, and they just said no. They won't pay anything. And it was only there because the club was there. And they wouldn't pay a thing. (Maine Road Resident, Interview, November 2003)

These concerns about MCFC's supposed lack of engagement over issues of nuisance extended for some residents into a broader belief that the club were not minded, especially during the 1990s, to engage more generally with the local community. Most residents testified that they knew of very few formal connections between MCFC and the local community that had been instigated by the club. One Manchester City councillor (a resident of Moss Side) told the research team:

I think the club's had a very variable track record of its contact with the local community. I mean, certain aspects of it such as Alex

Williams' community based programme have been very high profile and very effective. But I think the club's hierarchy hasn't paid much attention to Moss Side particularly and have come and gone in their cars every fortnight and left it behind quite gladly. So I wouldn't want to over-romanticize the relationship between the club at a senior level and the local community. Looking back I think they could have done much more in terms of their relationship with Moss Side. (MCC Councillor, Interview, October 2003)

Other residents of Moss Side concurred with this view. Residents interviewed by the research team knew of no formal communication channels between MCFC and the local community. Many also felt that the club did not 'take responsibility' for their supporters' actions, nor for their own impact on local people's lives.

From the information above, it can be seen that local residents around the Maine Road stadium held a range of opinions about MCFC's presence in their neighbourhood area. Most residents felt some pride in having the stadium as a near neighbour, or at least understood the benefits that the stadium could bring to the reputation of Moss Side. Some residents also resented the nuisance that the stadium brought to the area on match days, and questioned the club's commitment to engaging with local concerns.

The Redevelopment of Maine Road

When residents spoke to the research team about problems associated with Maine Road, nearly all referred to the redevelopment of the stadium in the 1990s as a particularly challenging period. They reported that community consultation over the redevelopment was poor at best and misleading at worst, and led to a very severe fracturing of relations between local residents and the football club. Many residents referred to the redevelopment as the 'lowest point' of their relationship with the football club, and claimed that their experience of the redevelopment directly affected their views on MCFC's departure from Maine Road and any potential plans for the future of the site.

MCFC started the post-Taylor-Report redevelopment of Maine Road with the demolition of the Platt Lane End in 1993. By the following year, the club had published its final plans for a redeveloped 45,000 seater stadium that would include a restaurant, shopping and ticket office complex on the former Kippax car park. The proposed total cost of the redevelopment was £40m. The first step to completing this plan was the demolition of the Kippax Terrace and the building of the new Kippax Stand. This work began in May 1994.

It is now difficult to gather completely accurate information on how consultation was conducted by MCFC around the building of the Kippax Stand and the potential complete redevelopment of Maine Road. It is clear, however, that a breakdown in communications occurred at some stage of the process that resulted in residents being shocked at the scale of the new stand. Local resident accounts tell us that very little consultation actually took place around the building of the stand. Those who were involved in consultation now claim that it was (allegedly for some, deliberately) misleading. The main contention is that the club did not accurately represent to local

people the height of the new stand, and did not explain the inconvenience that it would cause. One local resident explained their version of the story:

The main start of the bad feeling around the stadium came with the new stand, I don't know what it's called, but you know the one I mean. When that was built about 6 to 8, 10 years ago there appears to have been a problem with the plans, this is the local folklore, which is that somebody misread metres for feet, I don't know. But it is certainly true that it was an awful lot taller than we were expecting when it was done. And people went to the council ... and to this day people have trouble with their television receptions in the area, and that made the football club very unpopular. (Maine Road Resident, Interview, November 2002)

Other local residents explained similar stories to us. Indeed, every resident to whom we spoke testified to being 'shocked', 'alarmed' or 'surprised' by the scale of the new Kippax Stand when it was completed. If residents were not directly affected by the stand in terms of television reception, then they frequently believed that it was aesthetically unappealing and totally inappropriate for an area of low-rise terraced housing. All residents were convinced that the project should not have been granted planning permission, and stated that they would have campaigned to stop building work had they realised what was to come. One stated:

I just couldn't believe they'd done it. I couldn't believe they'd got away with it. It doesn't match other parts of the ground either. Actually, some of the old parts of the ground are quite elegant. The corrugated roof on the other side was a really nice stand of reasonable size. But that [the Kippax Stand] was just an ugly thing dumped there. I can't wait for it to go. I'd like to go and help knock it down. I'm just sick of seeing it. (Moss Side Resident, Interview, November 2003)

Whatever the truth of the consultation process around the building of the Kippax Stand, it is clear that residents felt, rightly or wrongly, that they had been 'betrayed' by the club, and that MCFC had put its own plans before the well-being of the neighbourhood.

Ultimately, the Kippax Stand was the only part of the proposed redevelopment of Maine Road to be completed as MCFC entered into negotiations with Manchester City Council to move into the City of Manchester Stadium. The Platt Lane Stand remained as it was after initial redevelopment in 1993, and no redevelopment work was undertaken on the Main Stand or the North Stand. Interestingly, a 13,144 square metres 'Amenities Block' – linked to the Kippax Stand - which was supposed to house shops, offices, and a community centre was also never built.

The End of Maine Road

In 1999 MCFC announced that it was planning to relocate from Maine Road to the new CoMS during summer of 2003. When the announcement was initially made, it appears that there was relatively little reaction from local residents in Moss Side and surrounding areas. By the end of summer 2002, however, concerns had started to be

raised locally about the potential future usage of the stadium site. These concerns once again centred on a perceived lack of community consultation.

In August 2002, an article appeared in the Manchester Evening News which was headlined “Residents’ plea to save Maine Road”. The article concerned the uncertain future of the Maine Road site, and claimed that ‘angry’ residents were worried that a demolition of the stadium would lead to the closing of local pubs and shops, leaving ‘the community devastated’ (MEN, 31 August 2002). At the time of the article, Manchester City Council, which was to take over ownership of Maine Road after MCFC’s departure, was in negotiations with Sale Sharks Rugby Football Club about a possible relocation to the stadium. The Manchester Evening News article suggested that residents in Moss Side were overwhelmingly in favour of such a move and did not want the stadium to be demolished.

The Manchester Evening News article on the future of Maine Road produced an unexpected reaction in Moss Side and surrounding areas. Upon reading the article, a number of residents wrote to the newspaper demanding to know who was making decisions about the future of Maine Road and who if anybody was conducting local consultation. As one resident explained to the research team:

The history of the Maine Road thing is really interesting. When it first came to my attention was when an article appeared in the ‘paper which said that everybody in the local area wanted Maine Road to stay. So I started to dig around and wrote a letter to the ‘paper ... and I wanted to know how this decision [to potentially keep the stadium] had been made. And it’s quite easy because you can go on the internet and look at the council minutes. And they’d had a meeting about the future of Maine Road which was a closed meeting, i.e. nobody was allowed in. But you could see who was there, and the only local councillor who was on that executive committee was Claire Nangle who was absent on that day. So there were no local councillors there at that point when the decision was made. (Maine Road Resident, Interview, November 2003)

As it became clear to a number of residents that no local councillors had been involved in discussions about the future of the Maine Road site and that no local consultation had taken place, they demanded to know more about how decisions were being made about the future of their neighbourhood. They discovered that KPMG had delivered a report to Manchester City Council in December 2000 that suggested two possible future uses for the Maine Road stadium: occupancy by Stockport County Football Club; or occupancy by Sale Sharks Rugby Football Club. The report was not freely available or widely circulated, and had involved no local consultation. As one local Liberal Democrat councillor put it to the research team: ‘the report is still unavailable to local councillors, most councillors never read the report, most councillors around the area have never seen the report, and I think that is very unsatisfactory’ (MCC Councillor, Interview, November 2002).

In the aftermath of the August 2002 *Manchester Evening News* article, a number of residents in the Maine Road area were concerned not only that they had not been consulted about the future of the stadium, but also that the Sale Sharks plan had not

been finalised nearly two years after it had originally been proposed. In this context, the local South Rusholme Residents' Association called a meeting in September 2002 to discuss the future of the stadium. At the meeting, Manchester City Council's claim that full local consultation had occurred around the future of the Maine Road site was disputed by residents and at least one local councillor. Residents particularly complained about the rather 'secretive' way in which discussions about the stadium were being conducted within Manchester City Council. It was discovered that the original council decision about the future of the stadium had been taken in a secret part of an executive council meeting in December 2000, and that the executive had used special urgency powers to make the decision come into immediate effect rather than referring it for scrutiny by the Scrutiny and Overview Committee (as per normal procedure). It was also discovered that when a local Liberal Democrat councillor had asked Labour Moss Side councillor Claire Nangle to facilitate a meeting on the future of the stadium in the 10 July 2002 Council Meeting, he had been met with a rather obstructive response. The councillor told us that Councillor Nangle stated that despite having the stadium in her ward, the future of Maine Road was not her concern because it was actually the Leader of the council's project. However, the Leader of the council, Richard Leese, could not be questioned on the matter because he was required, by virtue of his 'prejudicial' status as a MCFC season ticket holder, to leave council meetings that discussed the future of the stadium. Manchester City Council minutes confirm that the Liberal Democrat councillor asked Claire Nangle a question on the future of Maine Road in the 10 July 2002 meeting, but they do not record her response. They do confirm, however, that Richard Leese and 14 other councillors were required to leave that meeting because of 'prejudicial interests' (Manchester City Council Minutes, 10 July 2002).

Faced with what they perceived to be a lack of consultation and accountability, a number of residents' associations from the Maine Road area came together in September 2002 to gather local views about the future of the stadium. After initial discussions, the Maine Road Residents' Action Group (MRRAG) came into existence as an umbrella organisation for 7 separate residents' associations: Great Western Street; Moss Side; The Avenues; Thornton Road; South Rusholme; The Triangle; and Wilbraham Road. The first act of MRRAG was to organise a survey of local residents about the future of the Maine Road site. More than 4,500 surveys were distributed and approximately 500 were returned. The results showed that nearly 70 percent of respondents wanted the stadium to be demolished. The questionnaire also asked local residents what they wanted the stadium to be replaced with if it was demolished. Nearly two-thirds voted for a retail development, whilst other popular options included housing, leisure, or a youth facility.

With these results, members of MRRAG were confident that they could demand a place in future discussions about the Maine Road site. The group's members had demonstrated that the August 2002 Manchester Evening News article was incorrect to claim that all local residents wanted the stadium to stay. They claimed that they had uncovered local people's 'true' feelings about the stadium and the inconvenience that it had caused over the years. As one resident stated:

The reason people voted to get rid of the stadium was because we didn't want all the problems, all the nuisance, or whatever that we'd been putting up with. We were sick and tired of the rubbish in the

streets and the parking problems, and we were certainly sick of looking at the bloody horrible stand [the Kippax Stand], and this was a chance to get rid of it. If the council had bothered to ask us, they'd have known all this. (Maine Road Resident, Interview, November 2002).

With a 'mandate' from its survey MRRAG next wrote to the Chief Executive of Manchester City Council asking for local consultation to take place around the future of the stadium. The council agreed, and set up a series of consultation days around the Maine Road area where people could register views about the future of the stadium site. The council also agreed to send representatives to MRRAG meetings to gather views from committee members. This was not quite the open, public meeting that MRRAG was hoping for, but the group was happy that some consultation was now underway.

Between September 2002 and March 2003, MRRAG continued to hold meetings and attended consultation days staged by Manchester City Council. Despite initially campaigning for the demolition of Maine Road, the group were eventually convinced that the best option for the stadium was to find a new tenant, and hence came to support the relocation of Sale Sharks to Moss Side. To this end, members of MRRAG contacted Sale Sharks to ask what types of community programmes the club would put in place for local people. Sale Sharks even visited a number of schools in Moss Side to display their coaching development programmes for children.

In March 2003, the proposed deal between Manchester City Council and Sale Sharks collapsed. The council had offered to spend £2.5m improving the stadium and the surrounding area. It had even offered to remove the top tiers of the Kippax Stand to make the stadium less obtrusive for local people. Eventually, Sale Sharks decided to relocate to Stockport County's Edgely Park stadium instead, as the club believed it was more appropriate for its requirements. This left Manchester City Council with a 6.25-hectare site in south Manchester with no obvious immediate use.

In the aftermath of the collapsed deal with Sale Sharks, Manchester City Council re-launched its consultation events in Moss Side and surrounding areas. Residents were asked for their views on the future redevelopment of the stadium site as maintaining the stadium was no longer a viable option for the council. MRRAG was also superseded by the Maine Road Steering Group which included members of local residents' associations and was designed to ensure that local people had some input into the future of their neighbourhood.

On 5 February 2004, the demolition of the Maine Road stadium began in earnest. Although Manchester City Council did not have finalised plans for the future of the site, it had decided that it would be used for around 300 new homes, plus 'community' buildings such as health care facilities. In a press release, Manchester City Council stated:

The Maine Road site provides an excellent opportunity to boost the regeneration of Moss Side and Rusholme. This famous stadium may be being demolished, but this development will play a major part in

making this area an even more successful, welcoming and vibrant area (MCC Press Release, 4 February 2004).

At the time of writing, plans are still yet to be finalised for the Maine Road site. Guidelines for developers were published at the end of June 2004 which, according to the council, ‘spell out a determination to transform the former Maine Road stadium into a flagship for the regeneration of Moss Side and Rusholme’ (MCC Press Release, 30 June 2004). Potential developers have been asked to demonstrate how they would provide:

- A mixture of high quality housing – mainly for owner-occupiers
- A local supermarket or secondary shopping, if these can successfully be incorporated in the scheme
- A safe, attractive environment including an area of public open space
- Sites suitable for a cluster of neighbourhood services, including health, childcare, and other community services
- Proposals which integrate the new developments successfully with the surrounding streets (MCC Press Release, 30 June 2004)

It is interesting that Manchester City Council are proposing that the demolition of the Maine Road stadium in Moss Side is the key to the area’s regeneration. In East Manchester, of course, it is the building of a stadium, rather than the demolition of one, that is seen as central to that area’s regeneration.

Manchester City Council now claim that ‘regular consultation has taken place with local residents about the development of the Maine Road site’ (MCC Press Release, 30 June 2004). Residents who have been involved with MRRAG or the Maine Road Steering group are, however, more circumspect in their interpretations of the levels and quality of consultation that has taken place. One resident described the process as a ‘veneer of consultation’ rather than ‘true consultation’ (Maine Road Resident, Interview, November 2003). Another questioned why Manchester City Council had never conducted its own local survey, and asked why it had avoided staging public meetings (Maine Road Resident, Interview, October 2003). Many residents questioned the validity of consulting only with residents’ associations that are, according to some, undemocratic, unrepresentative and made up only of the self-selected few. From the research team’s observations, it was indeed noticeable that the majority of MRRAG’s members were ‘white’ people (usually women) over forty years of age. Very few young people or people from minority ethnic groups were represented in the organisation.

In addition to questioning the consultation process around the Maine Road redevelopment, a number of residents also pointed out one other fundamental point of concern to the research team: the absence of MCFC from discussions about its former home. Residents clearly understood that the stadium had passed into the ownership of Manchester City Council when MCFC moved to the City of Manchester stadium in June 2003. However, some were disappointed, although not necessarily surprised, that MCFC had played no part in discussions about the stadium’s future. It was suggested by more than one resident that MCFC could have acted as a ‘community advocate’ or a ‘go-between’ between the local population and Manchester City Council. Others

simply thought that the club should not have been allowed to abdicate responsibility for the future of a neighbourhood of which it had been a part for 80 years.

MCFC has in fact made a number of commitments to retain a 'presence' in the Moss Side area since it left the Maine Road stadium. To this end, the club is still operating a 'BlueZone' Learning Centre in Moss Side, and its Platt Lane Training Complex is still located in the area. However, somewhat in contradiction to opinions outlined above, many local residents are unconvinced that the club is 'needed' or wanted in the area. Many residents are untouched by or unaware of the club's formal community activities in Moss Side and surrounding areas, and some are deeply cynical about the purpose of the Platt Lane Training Complex.

The Platt Lane Training Complex was opened in the early 1990s as a partnership between MCFC and Manchester City Council and was supposed to be open to wide-ranging community usage. Since then, however, it has become MCFC's Academy training facility and, according to some local people and local councillors, is both too expensive and too inconvenient for local use. The exception here is the Oasis meeting room at the complex which has been used free of charge by local residents' associations including MRRAG. Some residents also told us that the training facility is something of a local nuisance.

These feelings came into sharp focus in summer 2003 when the Football Association warned MCFC that Platt Lane would lose its Academy status unless new covered pitches could be built on the site. In response, MCFC asked Manchester City Council for planning permission to build a 40ft-high, 200ft-long inflatable plastic dome at Platt Lane. Some local residents complained about the proposals, stating that the building would encroach on to nearby Platt Fields Park and was too loud and too bright to be located only 50ft away from nearby housing. MCFC was reported to be considering moving out of Moss Side altogether unless the council granted the club its wishes. A club spokeswoman was quoted as saying 'we very much want to stay in Moss Side, but if the council won't accept our request to build this structure we will have to look into alternative sites' (Manchester Evening News, 3 June 2003). Unfortunately, for some residents to whom the research team spoke this was yet another example of MCFC being a poor neighbour and of the club putting its own needs ahead of those of local residents.

National and Local Agendas and Community Involvement

We can see with the case of the MCFC Academy that, far from developments being a response to local needs, they are being set by a national FA football agenda, in this instance regulations about the desired size for football academies. These take little or no account of what impact they have locally and can mean that the club and/or local authority face criticism for trying to meet the requirements of a nationally set football regime over which they have no or little influence. As such, a greater flexibility on such issues within football nationally would enable clubs and local authorities to be more sensitive to local community concerns.

It is also sometimes difficult for local authorities and football clubs to maintain a regular and meaningful dialogue with local community representatives, and even harder with the wider local community who may not be represented in formal

organisations such as resident associations. This is especially so when new developments need to be delivered quickly and are occasionally commercially sensitive.

However, the persistence over a number of years of negative perceptions among local communities in Moss Side that the football club and the local council have, at times, not been engaged enough with local people and their concerns - especially regarding new developments - has lessons for the ongoing development of that area as well as for the new stadium site in East Manchester. As such ongoing developments should entail:

- An active and *meaningful* involvement in making decisions by local community representatives and other residents and businesses, facilitated by the football club and local authority
- Developments designed with local communities to meet their needs, as well as those of other parties such as the club
- Regular and accurate information sharing about developments, plans and options
- Independent monitoring of community involvement in the developments

5.1.2 Businesses

Whilst we are not in a position to conduct a full economic impact study, the research team has been interested in charting the effects of MCFC's stadium move on local businesses in the area around the Maine Road stadium. To do this, we have collected information on the changing character/nature of business activity in the Maine Road area between April 2003 (when MCFC was still resident at Maine Road) and August 2004 (one year after MCFC's move to East Manchester). We have also undertaken interviews and observations in and around Moss Side to gather the thoughts of businesspeople on the impact that the departure of the football club has had on the local economy.

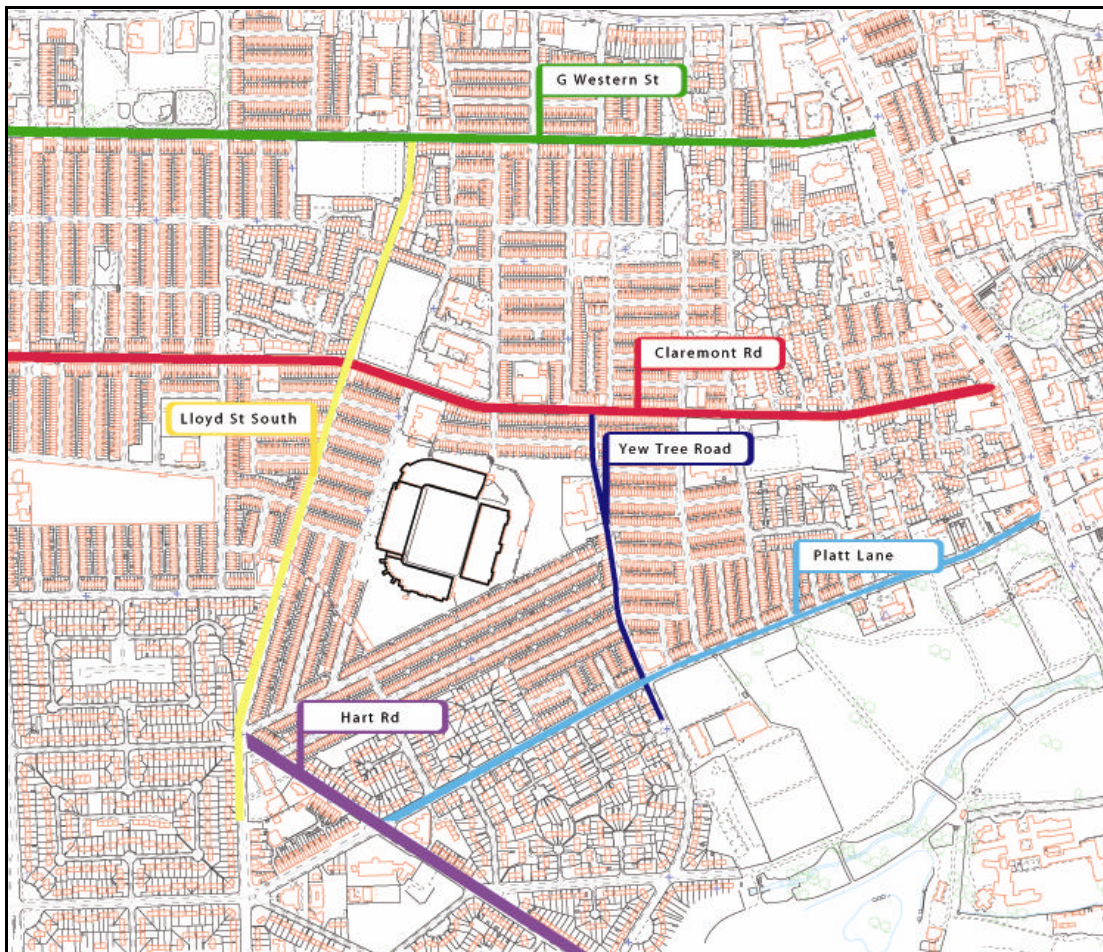
Maine Road Visual Business Survey

As part of our research for the second project interim report, the research team conducted a visual survey/count of businesses around the Maine Road stadium in April 2003 to gauge the impact of MCFC on the level and character of local trade. This survey concentrated on six main roads around the stadium: Clairemont Road; Yew Tree Road; Platt Lane; Lloyd Street; Hart Road; and Great Western Street (see Map 5.1). These are the main thoroughfares to the Maine Road site and were most likely to house businesses that were influenced by the activities of the football club. In this regard, these businesses were MCFC's most immediate geographical 'business community' when the club played at Maine Road. In August 2004 we surveyed the same areas again to see how the Maine Road business community had changed in the first year since MCFC's relocation to the City of Manchester stadium.

For the purposes of our survey, businesses around Maine Road were classified into 14 categories selected by the research team. The categories are:

- Public House
- Takeaway Food Outlet
- Restaurant
- Bookmaker
- Newsagents/Off License

- Other Shop/Retail
- Public Services
- Managed Workspace
- Light Industry
- Heavy Industry
- Warehouse
- Empty Property
- Place of Worship
- Other Services



Map 5.1: Manchester Maine Road Business Survey Areas⁵

As explained in the second interim report, the selection of these categories was informed by two central concerns. First, the research team wanted to establish a range of categories that would allow for the classification of all the business types that would be encountered around the Maine Road stadium, and around the other case study stadia in Leeds, Manchester and Sheffield. Second, within the 14 categories we wanted to include business types that, we assumed, would be found in high numbers around the case study stadia. The research team was particularly interested in measuring the number of businesses around Elland Road, Maine Road, the City of Manchester Stadium and Bramall Lane that depended in part or in whole on match-day activities for their trade. We decided to concentrate on businesses that were likely

⁵ Crown Copyright Ordnance Survey. An Edina Digimap/JISC supplied service.

to be used by football supporters on match days, and hence included the categories of public house, takeaway food outlet, restaurant, bookmaker, and newsagent/off license. By specifically measuring these categories, we believed that we could draw conclusions about the degree to which local 'business communities' around football stadia depend on the football clubs' activities for their existence.

Figures 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 show the results of the 2003 and 2004 business surveys. Figures 5.1 and 5.2 show respectively the 2003 and 2004 surveys broken down by area, whilst Figure 5.3 shows a comparison of the total results of the 2003 and 2004 surveys.

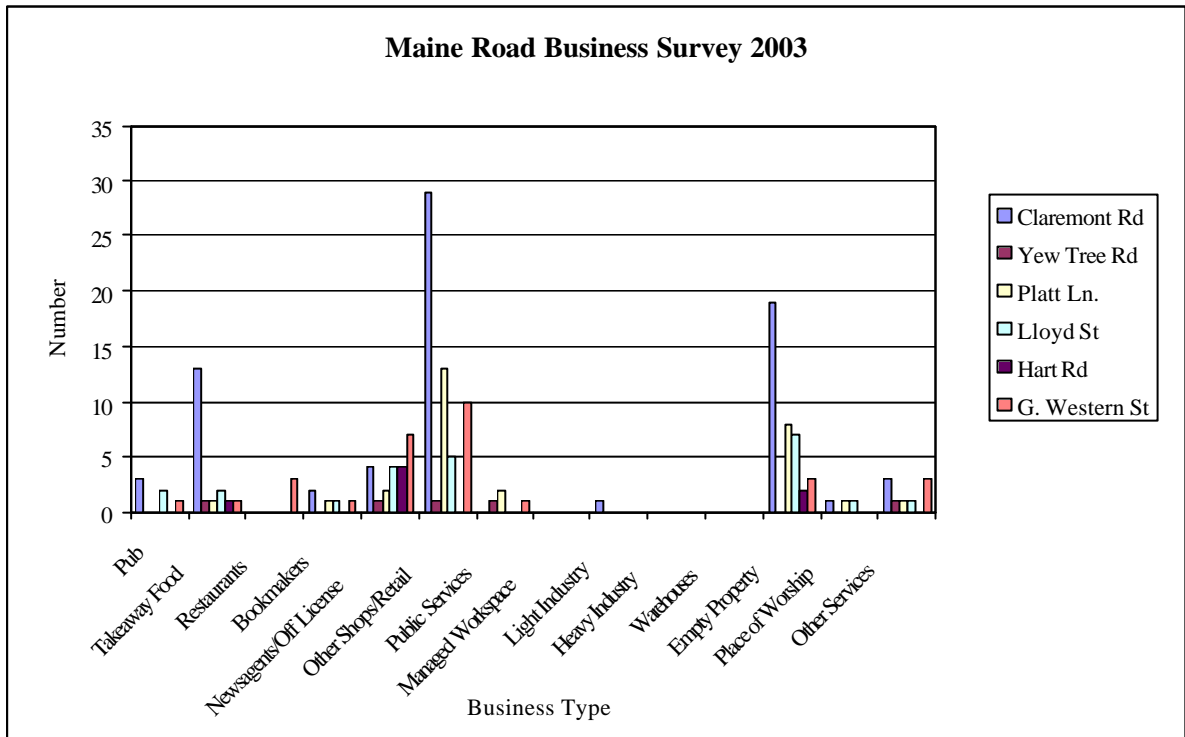


Figure 5.1

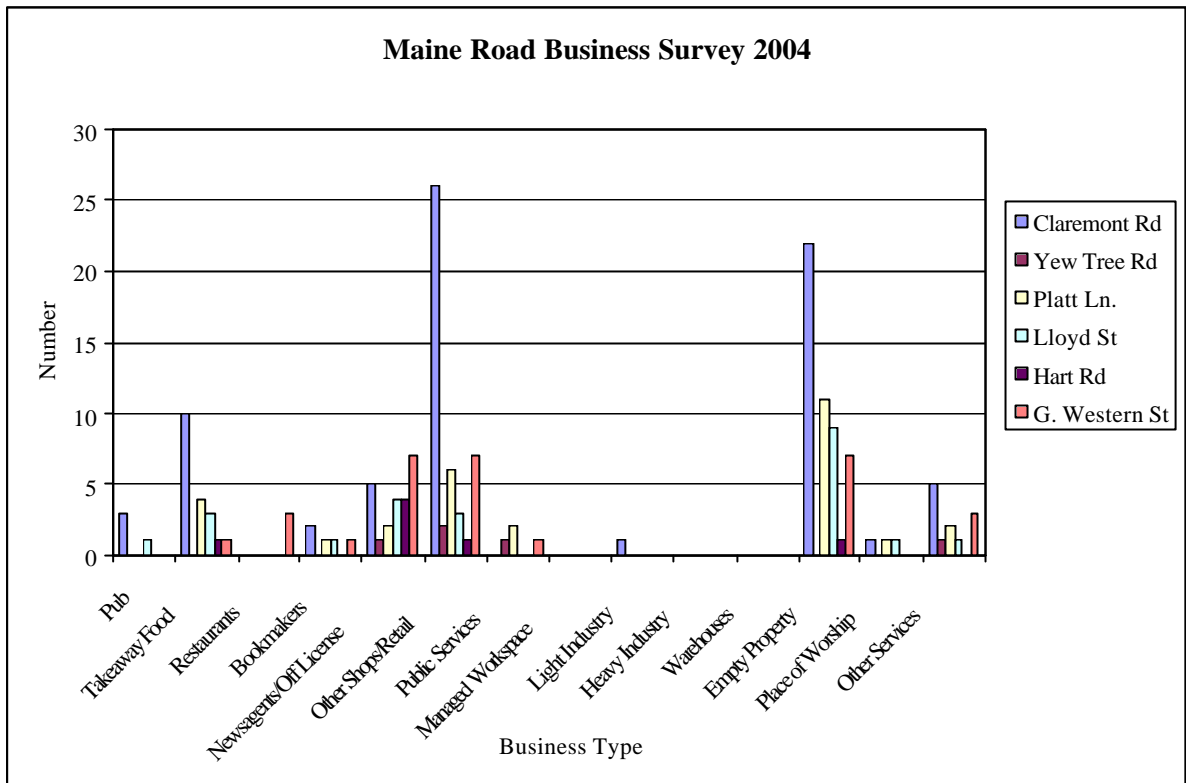


Figure 5.2

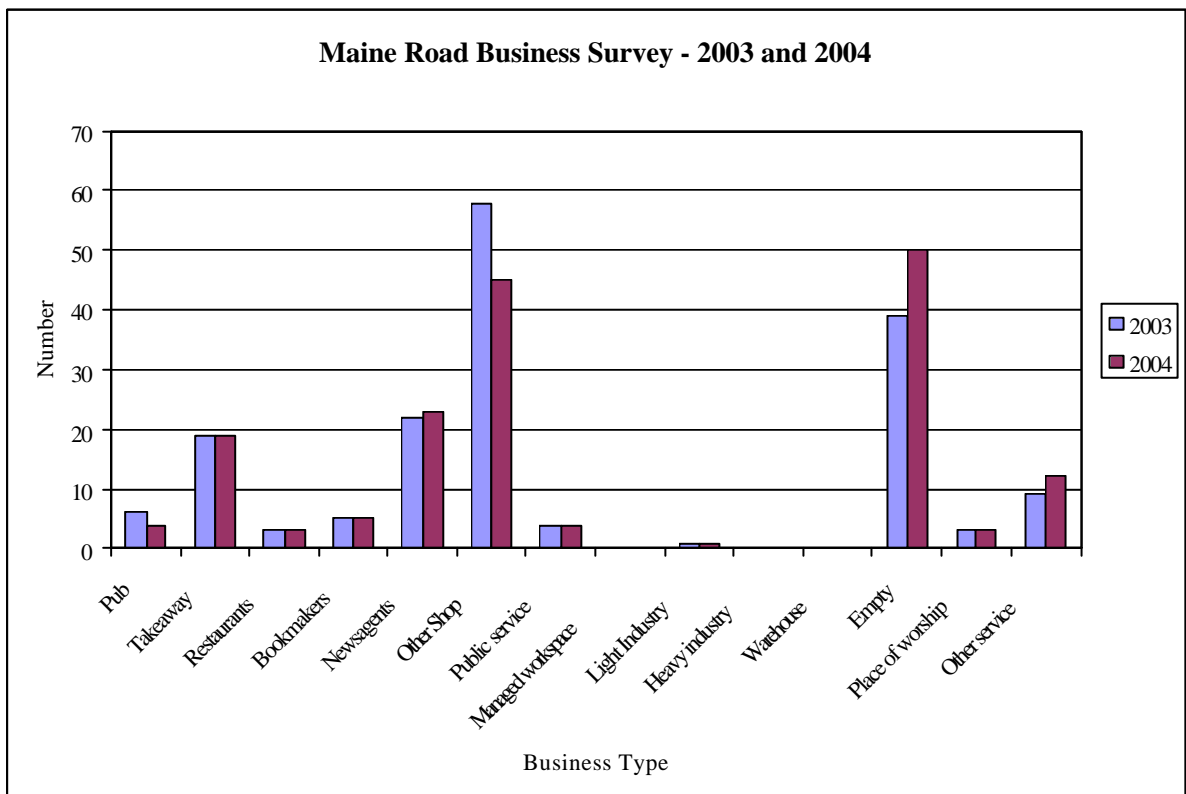


Figure 5.3

Figures 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 show the changing balance of business activity within the areas covered by the Maine Road business survey between April 2003 and August 2004. From the figures, and from information contained in Table 5.1, we can see that

in overall terms 2 public houses were lost from the area in the 16 month period, along with 13 ‘other shops’. It is also notable that 11 more business properties became empty in the Maine Road area between 2003 and 2004, whilst an additional newsagents/off license opened along with 3 more ‘other service’ businesses.

	No. OF BUSINESSES 2003	No. OF BUSINESSES 2004	No. CHANGE
Public House	6	4	-2
Takeaway Food Outlet	19	19	0
Restaurants	3	3	0
Bookmakers	5	5	0
Newsagents/Off License	22	23	1
Other Shop/Retail	58	45	-13
Public Service	4	4	0
Managed Workspace	0	0	0
Light Industry	1	1	0
Heavy Industry	0	0	0
Warehouse	0	0	0
Empty Property	39	50	11
Place of Worship	3	3	0
Other Service	9	12	3

Table 5.1: Maine Road Business Surveys 2003 and 2004: Total Results

In overall terms, it can be stated that the Maine Road business community saw a loss of a number of businesses in the year after the departure of MCFC to East Manchester. The geographical area measured by the research team had 29.56% of its business properties empty in August 2004, compared to 23.08% 16 months earlier: a rise of 6.48 percentage points. It also had notably fewer ‘other shops’ as a percentage of total business premises: 26.63% in 2004 compared to 34.32% in 2003.

Whilst the information contained in Table 5.1 may indicate that the closure of the Maine Road stadium has had a significant detrimental effect on the local business community, closer inspection of the business survey results may suggest otherwise. In total, the research team recorded 43 cases (or 25.44% of total local businesses) in which businesses had changed usage or had closed in the survey areas between April 2003 and August 2004. Of these 43, however, only 8 (or 4.73% of total local business) had changed from business categories that the research team deemed to be directly related to the activities of the football club in the second interim report (i.e. public house, takeaway, restaurant, bookmaker, and newsagent/off license). The other businesses to change usage or close during this period included house clearance shops, a computer games store, 2 hair dressers, a pharmacy, and a Highland knitters factory. Our interpretation is that these are unlikely to have closed because of an absence of match-day trade, although only more detailed information from the (former) owners could confirm this. Only one other local business - a sports clothing and equipment outlet - could in any way be described as being directly related to the football club. This means that the impact of MCFC’s move from Moss Side to East

Manchester may not have had quite the negative impact on the Maine Road business community that some were predicting (see below).

In addition to analysing the types of businesses to have closed in the Maine Road area since the departure of MCFC to East Manchester, it is also interesting to note the types of new businesses that have opened. In total, the research team counted 21 new businesses in the survey area (12.43% of total local businesses) in August 2004. These included a PC repair shop, a computing educational centre, a newsagent, a convenience store, an estate agent and a household goods shop. The most notable new businesses, however, were those that have opened to serve local ethnic populations. The research team counted 5 new businesses with links to local Caribbean populations (3 takeaway food outlets, one furniture shop and one 'black music' shop), and 2 new businesses with links to the local Somali population (one café and one general food store). This is significant, not least because the research team noted in its second interim report a belief amongst many Moss Side residents that the majority of businesses in the Maine Road area traded for the benefit of football supporters rather than the local 'community'. It appears that this balance is now being redressed, as 'football-focused' businesses are in part being replaced with businesses for local people.

Interviews/Observations with the Maine Road Business Community

In addition to carrying out surveys of local businesses in the Maine Road area, the research team has also completed a series of interviews and observations around the stadium to determine the impact of the departure of MCFC on local businesses. These were conducted both before and after MCFC's move to East Manchester in order that we could gather perceptions on the future effects of the move, as well as a number of actual consequences.

In the twelve months prior to MCFC's move to East Manchester, a great deal of concern was expressed through media and other channels about the potential consequences of the closure of Maine Road on businesses in Moss Side and surrounding areas. In August 2002, the Manchester Evening News printed an article which claimed that large numbers of business owners in and around Moss Side were pleading with Manchester City Council to keep the stadium open after MCFC's departure. Two public house owners were quoted as saying that their businesses would have to close after the move, whilst the owner of a food and cake shop stated: 'we are a stone's throw from the stadium, if it goes we won't be able to stay open, it's as simple as that. I would urge the council to keep it open and make good use of it' (MEN, 31 August 2002).

In the period prior to MCFC departure from Maine Road, a similar range of concerns were raised by local business owners and employees in interviews with the research team. A number noted, as they saw it, the centrality of MCFC to the well-being of the local economy, and doubted that many businesses would survive the closing of the stadium. As one businessperson stated:

When City go we'll lose the influx [of football supporters], we'll lose the visitors to the area and some of the businesses will go to the wall, no question. It could be devastating really and the council are going to

have to do something to support us. (Maine Road Businessperson, Interview, November 2002)

One local councillor also stated to the research team:

It [the closure of the stadium] will impact on the economy of Moss Side in all sorts of ways, in terms of shops and sandwich bars closing, pubs and chip shops going, and youngsters watching parked cars. It'll even hurt schools which used to charge for car parking (Manchester City Councillor, Interview, November 2002).

In order to understand these concerns, it is important to place them into the structural economic context of the Maine Road area. As we noted in our second interim report, Moss Side and its surrounding areas have long suffered from serious economic decline. This has been caused by, amongst other things, the depopulation of the local area, crime, and a lack of investment in local business infrastructures. Moss Side is not alone in suffering from this type of long-term economic recession. Many areas of Manchester (and most other British cities) have seen large numbers of small businesses close over the past twenty years as retail structures and habits have changed. A number of initiatives have been established in Moss Side to try to off-set these changes (such as the Moss Side and Hulme Agency for Economic Development), but these have not done enough to stop significant numbers of local businesses from failing.

As stated earlier, some businesses around the Maine Road stadium came to trade almost exclusively for MCFC supporters rather than local residents in recent years. This was probably a partial response to the general economic downturn in Moss Side, and a perceived lack of other local trading opportunities. In this context, it is not surprising that some local businesspeople in and around Moss Side were concerned that the closure of the Maine Road stadium would result in the closure of high numbers of football-dependant businesses. One local business owner stated to the research team that 'the football seemed to keep a lot of businesses going when others were closing because of other pressures' (Maine Road Businessperson, Interview, November 2003), and another stated 'without the football club, loads of businesses around here won't have any reason to exist' (Maine Road Businessperson, Interview, April 2003).

In contrast to the concerns expressed in the months before the departure of MCFC to East Manchester, a number of local businesspeople to whom the research team spoke noted the relatively small impact of the closure of the stadium after it had actually occurred. One newsagent told us that his business had not suffered as he had expected, save for the obvious loss of certain profits from match days (Maine Road Businessperson, Interview, November 2003). Another off-license/general store owner stated that he was actually pleased that the stadium had closed as his business had previously suffered from repeated incidents of theft on match days (Maine Road Businessperson, Interview, November 2003). He now hoped that his profits would improve as he no longer had to contend with the 'nuisance' caused by MCFC.

Other business owners/employees in the Maine Road area also noted other ways in which the impact of the stadium closure had not been as dramatic as had been feared

initially. Two business owners told the research team of incidents of MCFC supporters still travelling to the pubs and chip shops of Moss Side on match days so as to continue enjoying their traditional pre-match routines. A local resident from Moss Side also told the research team a similar story:

Our chippy ... some fans still come and they get what they want and then drive across to the new stadium. I said to the people who run the chippy "how come they still come", and they said "well they like the chips and they know where we are". They don't know where they are at the new stadium. Fans are happier coming over here, eating and then carrying on (Maine Road Resident, Interview, November 2003).

In addition to this, one owner of a general store and sandwich shop (which has visible links to MCFC in the form of pictures of players visiting the shop adorning the walls) told us that they had continued to trade with the club, supplying sandwiches, and also has occasional visits and trade from young players at the MCFC Academy which remains in nearby Platt Lane. The level of this residual business should not, of course, be overstated. It is notable, however, that these stories were told to the research team as indications of the continuing viability of businesses in the Maine Road area.

Although around a quarter of businesses have either closed or changed hands, the relatively small number of closures overtly due to the move of the football club seems to have been a welcome surprise to local business owners/employees. The more extreme predictions of a total local economic collapse did not come to pass, and many local businesspeople are now clearly willing/able to continue trading with a new, more local customer base. As we saw in the previous section, this confidence has seen a number of new businesses open in the Maine Road area, with some directed squarely at local ethnic populations. This phenomenon has not gone unnoticed by local businesspeople. One stated to the research team that she had noticed 'all the Somali and Caribbean places that have opened in the area' after the closure of Maine Road (Maine Road Businessperson, Interview, November 2003). She also stated, however, that details of this micro-economic repositioning rarely made it into the local press: 'who wants to know about that? They're only interested in bad stories about how everything's going to close' (Maine Road Businessperson, Interview, November 2003). This businessperson clearly believed that the local media 'discourse' about the economic collapse of the Maine Road area had not been fulfilled in the year after the closure of the stadium, and that few people were interested in a more 'positive' alternative.

Conclusion

From the information provided above, it is clear that some changes have occurred amongst the Maine Road business community since the departure of MCFC to East Manchester. It does not appear, however, that local businesses have been as severely affected by the move as was once predicted. In fact, it seems that certain parts of the local economy are simply altering their activities to meet the needs of the local population. This should ensure that many businesses in the Maine Road area will continue to function for the foreseeable future.

5.2 The Effects of the Stadium Move on the Residents and Businesses of East Manchester

We have already outlined the background and history to Manchester City's decision to move from Maine Road to the City of Manchester Stadium in East Manchester as well as the principal features and intentions of the unique development of the new stadium and Sportcity site. In i), below, we look at the effect of the move of a major football club into the area and present some thoughts about the effect of the move on local residents. In ii) we present both qualitative and quantitative findings about the effect of the move on local businesses before moving on in the next section (5.3) to consider the effect of the move on supporter communities.

It is worth remembering that, from the mapping exercise which we conducted for the second report, we can observe the following similarities and differences in the communities around Maine Road/Moss Side and those in East Manchester.

Similarities include:

- Economically active to a level below local and national standards
- Suffering from poor housing
- Suffering from multiple deprivation

However there are also a number of significant differences in the communities:

- Whilst Moss Side is diverse ethnically, with a large black/black British population, Beswick and Clayton are overwhelmingly drawn from white ethnic groups.
- Moss Side is diverse religiously, with a relatively large Muslim population; yet Beswick and Clayton is mainly Christian, with few other religions represented in the local area
- Moss Side has health statistics to a level commensurate with local and national standards; Beswick and Clayton are exemplified by relatively poor health levels, with a large number of people suffering from limiting long-term illnesses (partly due to its industrial past)
- The population in Moss Side is educated to a level slightly above local and national standards (partly reflecting its high student numbers); Beswick and Clayton's communities are educated to levels significantly below local and national standards

This may suggest different local needs and different priorities for both the football club and local/regeneration authorities; and also different relationships to the presence of the football club.

5.2.1 East Manchester Residents and Match days

The need to squeeze the maximum financial return out of the contemporary football stadium in some ways undermines the usefulness of the concept of a football ground as 'home'. Stadiums are increasingly put to a whole variety of uses which extend beyond the immediate identification with a particular football club and its supporters. Indeed before Manchester City moved to the new stadium, their Maine Road ground had already played host to a series of events such as pop concerts and religious festivals which had disrupted the local neighbourhood in different ways to the routine disturbances caused by football supporters. Equally, use of the City of Manchester

Stadium is not restricted to the staging of Manchester City first team matches. Manchester City do not own the stadium and, as we have already described in Section 3, it is a condition of the club's occupancy that the stadium is made available for a range of other events. Whilst at some levels this enables the wider residential community to engage with the site in a variety of ways, at other times additional use of the stadium can create further disruption beyond that associated with the staging of MCFC's 'home' matches, although small community events are, of course, unlikely to cause much disruption.

Between Sunday 30th May and Saturday 5th June a triangular international tournament was staged at the City of Manchester Stadium involving England, Iceland and Japan. The staging of England 'home' matches at club stadiums has been a feature since Wembley stadium was closed for re-development in late 2000. Whilst many of England's games since then have been played in Manchester due to the capacity of Manchester United's Old Trafford stadium exceeding that of any other club ground in the country, no game had been played at City's ground since Maine Road staged a match with Northern Ireland in 1949. The hosting of England games brings with it additional issues to those associated with domestic matches. A far greater proportion of fans from outside the region travel to these matches and often stay in the host city for one or two nights in order to 'make a weekend of it'. There are a number of consequences that flow from this which have the potential to add to the disruption normally felt on match day in the neighbourhoods surrounding the stadium:

1. The fans attending these games do not have the same attachments and concern for the area staging the event. Whilst our figures later show that MCFC draws support from the wider Manchester conurbation and further a field, England fans' tie is to the national team, not the city or neighbourhood hosting the match. Indeed rather than having an attachment to that area they may well harbour feelings of topophobia, animosity and rivalry towards it and the association of the stadium with its usual occupants.
2. Where attendance at the match forms part of a wider weekend of leisure activity those fans are more likely to be boisterous and in search of alcohol, whilst at the same time being less familiar with the local licensing restrictions, practices and customs of licensed premises.
3. Having no need to maintain harmonious relationships given their highly specific and contingent presence in the area, fans may have less awareness and feel less obliged to show respect towards parking, drinking and transport regulations which have become part of the week-by-week routine for club fans.
4. A minority of fans who follow the England national team are associated with a culture of spectator violence and generalised disorder. In recent years 'home' matches involving the national team have become the principal outlet for such disorder which is generally characterised by confrontations between rival sets of domestic club fans who use the staging of England games as an opportunity to meet up and 'settle scores'. Such disorder generally takes place in residential neighbourhoods in the areas surrounding the football stadium.

Whilst little disturbance would have been caused by the first of the three games in this tournament, which involved Japan and Iceland and attracted a relatively small audience of around 3,000 people (to which we refer in section 5.3), we conducted observational work to explore these issues around the matches between England and Japan and England and Iceland which were better attended. The England v Iceland match in particular, which was staged on a sunny Saturday afternoon, drew a near capacity crowd to what was England's last warm up match before departing for the Euro 2004 finals in Portugal.

With a late afternoon kick off, many fans had been drinking in Manchester city centre for several hours before making their way along Ashton New Road towards the stadium. The limited number of pubs to service this procession led those on the route to impose a strict door control policy which led in turn to a number of confrontations as groups of fans attempted to gain access to premises. From our observations, these seemed to be fairly well contained by the pubs' own security staff but there was undoubtedly a less subdued atmosphere amongst fans making their way to the stadium than would be the case for a City match. On a related note, many more fans were also drinking from cans of beer as they walked to the stadium, a practise which has been banned in Manchester and areas surrounding the City of Manchester stadium on regular match days. On this occasion the volume of visitors unfamiliar with this practice, allied to the absence of available public houses meant that the regulations were openly flouted. The combination of these circumstances undoubtedly contributed to the wider presence of other forms of anti-social behaviour, including a line of supporters urinating against the back fences of houses on the south side of Ashton New Road and the open dropping of litter, including beer cans, along the route up to the stadium.

When the research team spoke to East Manchester agencies about the nuisances caused by events at the City of Manchester stadium, it was confirmed to us that residents' complaints had been much higher after the international matches than after 'normal' MCFC matches. A representative from the New Deal for Communities team stated that drinking and public urination had been particular issues before and after the England matches, as had litter (NDC Representative, August 2004). However, he also went on to state that the most significant problems for residents had been caused by the staging of a rock concert at the stadium in June 2004. This event, headlined by the Red Hot Chili Peppers, began at 4pm, although fans started to arrive in East Manchester from 11am. The main problems for residents occurred after the concert finished at 11pm when approximately 55,000 people left the stadium to move back towards the city centre. Additional stewarding and temporary toilets had been provided outside the stadium, but these did not prevent widespread public urination and other forms of anti-social behaviour. The NDC representative stated that, in his opinion, many of these problems had been caused by the music fans' lack of knowledge of East Manchester, coupled with in some cases a commensurate lack of concern for area.

In contrast to these problems, and perhaps given the staging of the England vs. Iceland match so close to the Euro 2004 finals, there were clear signs of an engagement with England fans and the game amongst local residents during our observations. Many homes close to the ground had Cross of St George flags draped from their windows and some residents stood in the street and in their gardens waving

flags at the passing England fans. This situation contrasts quite markedly with the atmosphere on a typical 'home' match day for Manchester City. On the first few occasions that City played in their new stadium, walking from the direction of Beswick shopping centre, it was quite striking the extent to which local residents came out and 'watched' rather than engaged with City fans moving towards the ground, emphasising the difference between neighbourhood and fan communities.

Inverting the mythologizing of the 'urban jungle', where the residents of such locales become the object of the institutional gaze of the welfare authorities and voyeuristic musings of documentary makers, here it was almost as though the fans had become exhibits in a safari park. One set of residents in a block of flats on Grey Mare Lane even stood on their balconies drinking cans of lager whilst watching City fans go by before the Portsmouth match, turning the local authority regulations on fans drinking in the street to protect the interests of residents on their head. The spectacle of residents watching fans is not isolated, rather it is quite routine and extends far from the ground, partly as a means of 'community' policing, keeping a check on unwanted parking and anti-social behaviour, and partly as a source of entertainment, an equally voyeuristic pleasure in watching the ritualised gathering of a congregation. Prior to the building of the new stadium, residents were entirely unaccustomed to large numbers of visitors descending upon the area.

At the same time this is a two way window and the neighbourhoods surrounding the stadium have become the object of City fans' own observations and reflections, J asking his Mum on the day of the Portsmouth match why all the houses (actually only a few) were boarded up which prompted a discussion of the relative deprivation of the area. Another fan stopped to ask an onlooker before the friendly with Barcelona how they felt about the presence of the stadium, with the ambivalent response 'we'll see how it goes', prompting the friendly and well meaning City fan to ask 'has it got any better [around here]?'.

Whilst somewhat patronising, the question seemed to imply an internalised sense that the stadium was part of a regeneration strategy and the idea that City had moved to a deprived area that needed to be *made* 'better'. Further it also suggested the fan's own investment in that process and revealed a desire on the part of this fan and his friends to engage with local residents – to have a good relationship with their new neighbours in a similar fashion to the ways in which 'respectable' people behave when moving house... in contrast to urinating in gate ways.

This attitude contrasts to some of the negative comments made about the Moss Side population by some fans before the club moved ground. In response to a report about possible future uses of Maine Road, the following comments were posted on [Blueview](#), one of the main independent Manchester City websites:

- '- bloody hellfire that'd be a big fookin chemist. just be stocking methodone, i expect
- or a bloody big post office, just dishing out giro's and pensions all day
- how about an immigrant & refugee centre ? could squeeze 34,000 in there'
- MRRAG [Maine Road Resident's Action Group] could have had a better name. How about

WELIVETWENTYYARDSFROMMAINEROADBUTBUYOURKIDSHAVE REDSHIRTS?' (Blueview, 2 December 2002)

In contrast to supporters in East Manchester these comments demonstrate both a lack of concern for the problems of deprivation suffered by the local population, as well as a resentment of a supposed support for the club's city rivals, United. This is despite other evidence suggesting that support for United in that area is lower than that for City (Brown 2002), and that the discussion occurred in relation to proposals for regenerating the area.

However, from information gathered in interviews in East Manchester, it seems that residents' representatives in particular - those most involved in the organisations and processes of regeneration - are generally positive about the move of the club to the area. This relates to the overall benefits which they see as coming to the area and the centrality of the stadium development as the most visible sign of the area's physical regeneration (new housing schemes are only now coming on stream).

The positive interpretations of the move have certainly been helped by a residents' parking scheme and an absence of severe parking problems on match day, notwithstanding the other inconveniences. Indeed, Manchester City has been involved in developing a transport strategy with New East Manchester, Greater Manchester Police, Manchester City Council the Greater Manchester Public Transport Executive. This has involved:

- promoting the use of public transport
- a residents' parking scheme extending to a mile around the stadium
- promotion of 'safe walking routes'
- regular meetings of the transport group and reviews of progress

Initial surveys conducted by New East Manchester at the start of the 2003/04 season suggested that, compared to around 72% private car use by fans at most grounds, about 60% of Manchester City supporters were walking to the ground over at least the last mile of their journey. This monitoring was repeated by NEM in January 2004 when weather was more adverse, yet it was still found that approximately 53% of fans were walking to the ground. Residents' representatives to whom we spoke indicated that despite initial fears, they had been pleasantly surprised by the lack of traffic problems.

As described in the previous section, some Moss Side residents said that they missed the presence of the club and atmosphere on match days. This is what has been termed the 'psychic income' (Bale 2000: 92) that residents can feel, even if they suffer the inconveniences of a club next door. This can come from being associated geographically with a famous site and one which is regularly a destination - indeed as Bale has argued, a place of worship - for tens of thousands of people. People know the area because of the ground. It is arguable that this psychic income is now benefiting the residents of East Manchester who may also, at times, suffer similar inconveniences now absent from Maine Road.

One local resident representative we spoke to in October 2003, argued that despite his own, vociferous concerns about the impact of the football club in advance of it taking occupancy - primarily traffic issues and population movement - he had been

pleasantly surprised. Not only had problems not been as severe as predicted, but he said:

there's almost what I'd call a semi-carnival atmosphere here on match-day, it's a new thing for the people here. The more people are around the better you feel, although there is a burden on actually moving around the area on match day. (East Manchester Resident, Interview, October 2003)

Alongside arguments concerning economic benefit and loss which we discuss in relation to businesses, we can see here a pattern of profit and loss, in social and cultural terms, at both the former and new location.

Other regulations which are cited by both residents and the club as minimising nuisance to the community on match day are:

1. enforcement of local byelaws that restrict drinking alcohol to licensed premises and inside the stadium (this was enforced during the Commonwealth Games and has been rigorously imposed in the city centre)
2. a ban on street traders

We think there are a number of conflicting elements to the 'community benefit' of these regulations. It should be noted that both are supported by the club, police, council and the resident representatives to whom we spoke.

With regard the alcohol ban, the club and local publicans freely admit that they benefit economically from it as it removes the practice, which was common at Maine Road, of fans buying cheap cans from local off licenses and drinking them on the street. Indeed, a Manchester City official told us that 'the only people who don't benefit... are off licenses and so on... [but] the local pubs benefit and we clearly benefit from it' (MCFC Staff, Interview, 2004).

The street trading ban is presented as both for the benefit of the local area by reducing litter and nuisance, as well as (by the club) a means of stopping the sale of what they consider to be inferior counterfeit goods to fans:

It was to stop illegal sales of rip-off merchandise basically. We, first of all, lose a lot of money by people selling fake goods, but also the fans lose out because they're paying money for shirts that fall to pieces the day after, and some of them clearly hold the club responsible when that happens and we're not. So it was agreed that there would be a street trading ban which is strictly enforced. The slight downside of that really is that it also applies to food. Well it depends what your view of that is, you don't get the hot dog sellers up and down the street which is probably a good thing. (PB Interview 2004)

The ban on trading and alcohol has also removed some of the traditional 'market' atmosphere in the streets around the ground that was a feature of Maine Road. This drew some criticism from fans at the very start of the 2003/04 season:

No fanzine sellers, no badge sellers, nada. Very disappointing . Even Man U and Arsenal allow or at least tolerate them in and around the ground. It brings life to the surrounds and yes, MCFC Marketing people, it fulfils a need. Stop

trying to look so corporate and let the fans own a bit of the club. (Blueview 11 August 2003)

However, we were also told that the trading ban extends throughout the week and jeopardised some food stalls that served local factories, and, although new pitches were found for those traders, it did cause them some disruption. Also, it needs to be noted that the club itself is allowed 6 food vans on the Sportcity site itself, licensed by the club, for which they earn revenue. This also suggests that although the ban may reduce some nuisance, it has an economic benefit to the club.

Furthermore, Manchester City officials have told us that the new smart/proximity cards by which fans gain entrance to the stadium (see below), may be used in future to store currency and record purchases inside the stadium - including alcohol and food which might otherwise have been bought outside - which then can earn fans bonus or 'loyalty' points on their membership/season ticket. As such, this new commercial direction of the club is enhanced by regulations put in place to relieve the community of 'nuisance'. Also, it is clear that although these measures may be supported by a wide range of stakeholders, and clearly local pubs and the club benefit economically, other elements of the local business community may suffer. However, although to some extent local regulations may affect off licenses etc., the economic impact of the new giant Asda/Walmart store adjacent to Sportcity may be more of a cause. We discuss this further below.

It was also notable that although the development of the Sportcity site and the move of the club to the area is clearly the biggest (and arguably most positive) development that the neighbourhood has seen in recent times, it may be suggested that positive and negative effects have been felt by local residents.

5.2.2 The Effect of the Stadium Move on East Manchester Businesses

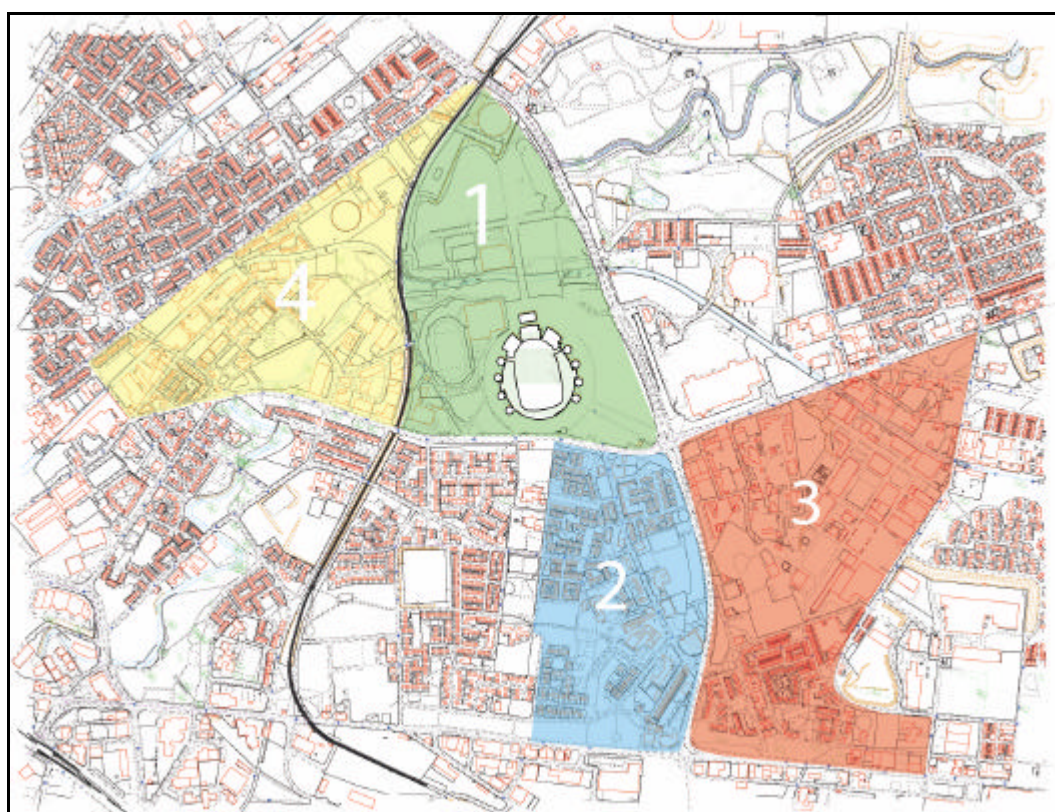
To chart the effects of MCFC's move to the City of Manchester Stadium on the East Manchester business community, the research team has collected information through a visual survey of business properties on the changing character/nature of business activity in East Manchester between April 2003 (before MCFC's departure from Maine Road) and August 2004 (one year after MCFC's move to East Manchester). We have also undertaken interviews and observations in and around East Manchester to gather the thoughts of businesspeople on the impact that the arrival of the football club has had on the local economy.

East Manchester Visual Business Survey

Whilst not in a position to conduct a full economic impact study, as part of our research for the second project interim report, the research team conducted a visual count of businesses around the CoMS in April 2003. This was designed to measure the level and type of local business activity in the area around the stadium in the run up to the 2003/04 football season (Manchester City's first season of occupancy in the stadium). We wanted to gather information on the pre-existing business 'community' of East Manchester, and also to judge how the area was gradually changing as a result of the new stadium.

We must bear in mind that apart from Manchester City's occupancy at the stadium, there is also widespread ongoing economic development including: new housing developments; other construction; and the new giant Asda/Walmart store. All of these will have an ongoing impact on businesses around the stadium and it is perhaps difficult to separate the particular effects of the football club's occupancy of the stadium. As such, most of our focus is on businesses which we consider to be most likely affected by the influx of thousands of football fans to the area.

We gathered information on the types of businesses present in four areas in East Manchester (see Map 5.2). This was done for geographical convenience, rather than because identifiable business clusters could be found in these areas. We again classified the businesses according to the 14 categories detailed in our analysis of the Maine Road business community (see above).



Map 5.1: East Manchester Business Survey Areas⁶

Figures 5.4, 5.5 and 5.6 show the results of the 2003 and 2004 East Manchester business surveys. Figures 1 and 2 show respectively the 2003 and 2004 surveys broken down by area, whilst Figure 3 shows a comparison of the total results of the 2003 and 2004 surveys.

⁶ Crown Copyright Ordnance Survey. An Edina Digimap/JISC supplied service.

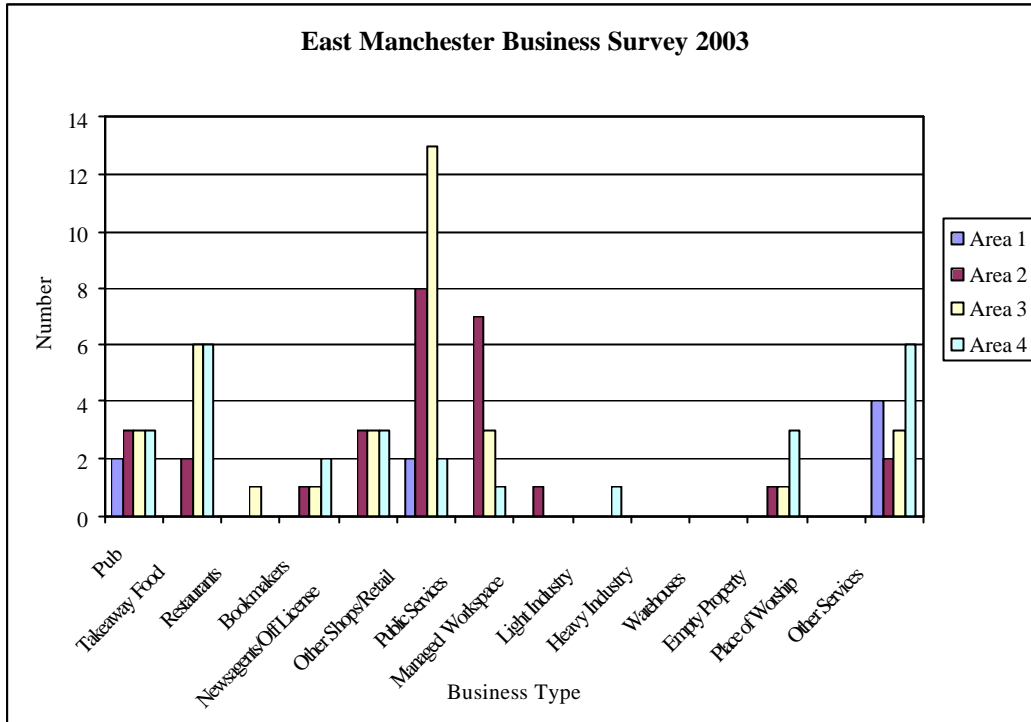


Figure 5.4

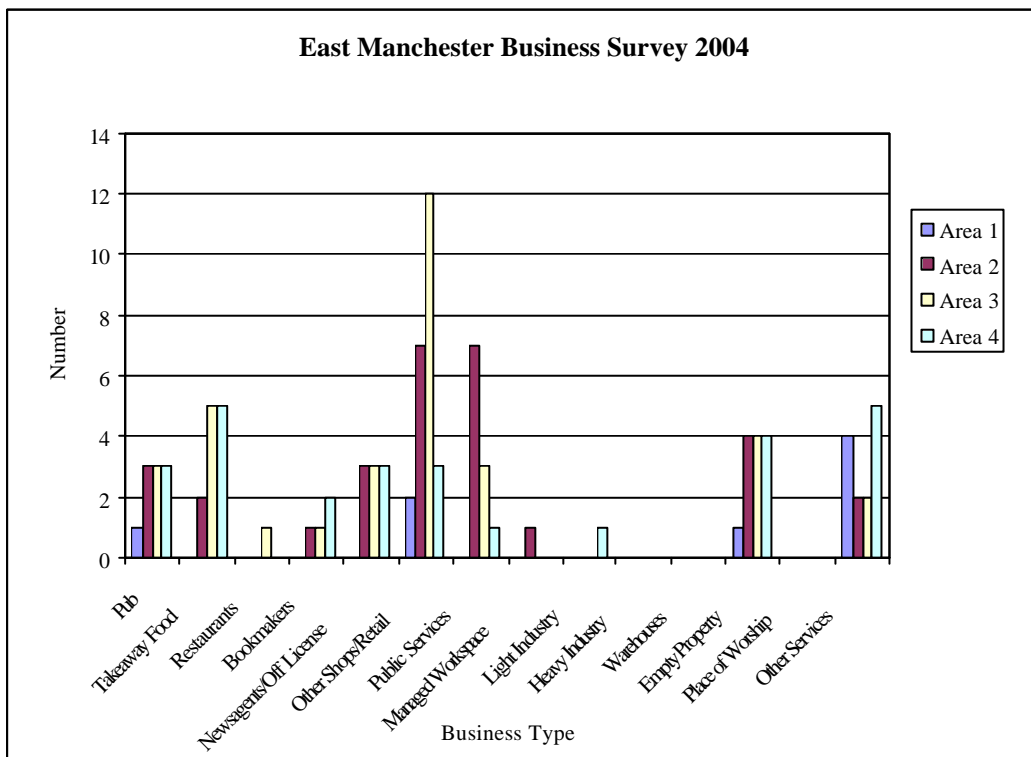


Figure 5.5

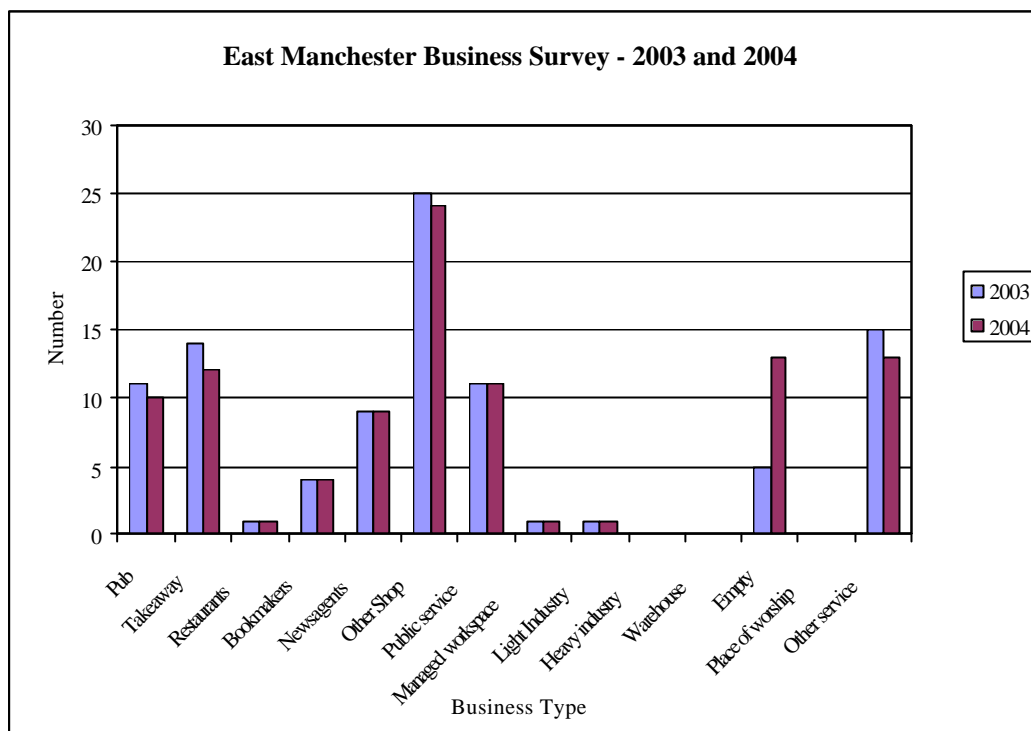


Figure 5.6

Figures 5.4, 5.5 and 5.6 show the changing balance of business activity within the areas covered by the East Manchester business survey between April 2003 and August 2004. From the figures, and from information contained in Table 5.2, we can see that in overall terms 2 new business properties opened in the survey areas in the 16 month period. However, we can see that the area lost 1 public house, 2 takeaway outlets, 1 'other shop' and 2 'other services'. It is also notable that 8 more business properties became empty in the chosen area between April 2003 and August 2004.

	No. OF BUSINESSES 2003	No. OF BUSINESSES 2004	No. CHANGE
Public House	11	10	-1
Takeaway Food Outlet	14	12	-2
Restaurants	1	1	0
Bookmakers	4	4	0
Newsagents/Off License	9	9	0
Other Shop/Retail	25	24	-1
Public Service	11	11	0
Managed Workspace	1	1	0
Light Industry	1	1	0
Heavy Industry	0	0	0
Warehouse	0	0	0
Empty Property	5	13	8
Place of Worship	0	0	0
Other Service	15	13	-2
TOTAL	97	99	2

Table 5.2: East Manchester Business Surveys 2003 and 2004: Total Results

From Table 5.2, it might appear that there has been an overall negative effect on the number of businesses in operation, with also an increase in empty properties, although in most areas there has been no or minimal change. In the selected geographical area, 13.13% of its business properties were empty in August 2004, compared to 5.15% 16 months earlier: a rise of 7.98 percentage points. It also had marginally fewer ‘other shops’ as a percentage of total business premises: 24.24% in 2004 compared to 25.77% in 2003.

However, it would be stretching the point to suggest that Manchester City’s occupancy of the stadium had resulted in a dramatic economic downturn in the area, for a number of reasons. This survey says nothing about the size, turnover or employment levels in each business and as we illustrate below some small businesses have reported an upturn in activity, whilst others have said that it has had a negative effect. Furthermore, it is difficult to assess the impact of the Asda/Walmart store as this has been cited as both providing considerable local employment (80 per cent of its 800 workforce from the local area (Manchester Evening News July 2003)); as well as a reported potential negative effect on local businesses in the area⁷. What we can say is that it seems that relatively few small local businesses have benefited greatly from the presence of Manchester City, but neither has it had a dramatic negative effect.

To further analyse changes in the nature/character of business activity in East Manchester, it is worth inspecting the business survey results more closely. In total, the research team recorded 13 cases (or 13.13% of total businesses in August 2004) in which businesses had opened, changed ownership, or closed between April 2003 and

⁷ <http://www.redpepper.org.uk/natarch/x-commonwealth-games.html>

August 2004. Of these 13, 1 changed to a business category that the research team deemed to be directly related to the activities of the football club in the second interim report (a Chip Shop takeaway food outlet). However, a further 3 businesses moved away from 'football-related' business categories (1 public house and 2 takeaway food outlets). The remaining businesses all moved to or from categories that the research has not deemed to be particularly related to the activities of football clubs and their fans. This suggests a very mixed picture in terms of the effect of MCFC's move to the CoMS on 'football-related' businesses. Whilst some businesses are moving to the area and/or re-branding to exploit links with MCFC, others are closing or moving elsewhere.

The mixed effect of MCFC's move on East Manchester's business landscape is particularly well represented by the cases of three businesses in the survey areas. In August 2004, a new takeaway food outlet called 'The City Chippy' opened in East Manchester. The outlet is housed in a converted section of a public house (Mary D's) located directly adjacent to the CoMS. This is a clear example of a business opening in East Manchester to trade on links with MCFC and to exploit match-day trade. In this regard, this chip shop has followed the example set by a number of public houses and other businesses in East Manchester which changed names and/or re-branded their activities in the run up to MCFC's move to East Manchester in 2002/03 (see below). Two such businesses were Summerbee's public house (owned by ex-MCFC player Mike Summerbee) and the Blues Sandwich Bar. Both of these businesses clearly opened in the hope of trading on direct links with MCFC. However, both have closed during the first year of MCFC's residence at the CoMS - Summerbee's is now empty and awaiting sale, whilst the Blues Sandwich Bar has been re-branded as the Galaxy Takeaway. Expectations that these businesses would enjoy strong levels of trade through associations with MCFC were clearly not met, indicating the so-far rather uncertain influence of the football club on the East Manchester business landscape.

Interviews/Observations with the East Manchester 'Business Community'⁸

Since Manchester City's move to the CoMS in summer 2003, the research team has conducted a number of interviews and observations in East Manchester to gather information on the impact of the football club on the local business community. We have also interviewed club officials about their relationship with local businesses, and have assessed club policies towards the local business community.

The first and most obvious point noted by the research team when visiting businesses in East Manchester was the relatively small number of businesses that were likely to be influenced by MCFC's residence at the new stadium. As mentioned above, relatively few functioning retail businesses actually exist around the CoMS, and those that do are dispersed over a wide geographical area. In fact, despite its proximity to Manchester city centre, the CoMS 'feels' much more akin to a new 'out of town' football stadium, located in relative isolation from small retail businesses, than it does an old-fashioned inner-city stadium such as Maine Road.

⁸ Some of this section was included in the second interim report from the research team. It is reproduced, expanded and updated here because of its central relevance to the concerns of this report.

The 'out of town' appearance of the COMS is enhanced by the large-scale retail developments that are emerging around the stadium and the Sportcity site. To the east of the stadium, a 160,000 sq ft Asda Walmart store has opened along with a McDonald's restaurant. Furthermore, New East Manchester Ltd, Manchester City Council and others are currently developing plans to build a significant retail park on 'brownfield' land adjacent to the Sportcity site that will include shops, leisure facilities and a hotel; and there are also plans for a casino and ice-rink. The public bodies involved in the construction of the Sportcity site have long proposed that it would contribute to the broader regeneration of East Manchester by drawing businesses to the local area, along with other 'spin-offs' such as new residential developments. New East Manchester Ltd, for instance, estimates that the Sportcity development will help to stimulate 3,500 new long-term jobs in the East Manchester area.

If the COMS and the Sportcity site are formally designed to attract new retail and leisure businesses to East Manchester, their impact on existing businesses in the local area is less well defined (as evidenced above). In interviews with MCFC personnel, the research team were informed that the club believed that the stadium was having a positive effect on pre-existing local businesses, and that pubs and other shops in the local area were taking on increased numbers of staff as a result. The club were also keen to point out the number of local jobs that had been created directly at the stadium, particularly on match days. The club told us that around 950 match-day jobs had been created since MCFC's move to East Manchester, and that the vast majority of these had gone to local people. They also said that they had worked with New East Manchester Ltd on this process to ensure that local people have the skills required for the new jobs. This partnership has also tried to ensure that local people can manage new jobs at the stadium in ways that will not compromise their ability to claim certain state benefits.

However, we have also had more negative comments about the levels of local employment (indeed club officials had admitted that they had vacancies at the start of the 2003/04 season which they had not been able to fill through local people). Also one local agency said that they did not consider the type of jobs created (part-time and casual) or the wages paid, was the sort of employment that they were seeking for the local area. This suggests that a more concerted effort is needed between the club and local agencies to improve both the levels and the nature of local employment at the club.

When the research team visited businesses in East Manchester, we heard mixed stories about the impact of the stadium on trading conditions in the local area. On the positive side, one landlord whose pub is located in the direct vicinity of the stadium claimed that the stadium:

has been great for business to be honest with you. Really great. We've got two function rooms and we open them up on match-days and one of them is used by the official, main Manchester City Supporters' Club and they have meetings there every couple of weeks, so that brings people in as well but we're rammed on match-days, so it's been great (East Manchester Businessperson, Interview, November 2003).

The landlord also explained that the pub has benefited from extra trade on non-match-days:

people come into the City [club] shop and pop in for a pint on their way. We had a couple of Norwegians in the other day who were over for a match but came over a few days early and came in here for a good drink. So that brings a new mix to the area (East Manchester Businessperson, Interview, November 2003).

It is interesting that this landlord did not simply presume that his pub's proximity to the CoMS would bring increased custom and other associated benefits, but actually redecorated and re-branded his business to attract Manchester City supporters. The pub's exterior is newly decorated in white and sky blue (Manchester City's 'home' colours), and the main function room now includes a large mural of the old Maine Road stadium on one wall. The pub also displays numerous Manchester City posters, club crests and other insignias. It even serves a new drink known as the 'Blue Moon Cocktail' (a reference to the 'Blue Moon' song sung by Manchester City fans) and is the site most associated with the Manchester City Supporters Club.

At the time of our visit, this pub's increased business on match days had inspired the landlord to diversify his business operations into two new areas. Specifically, he had re-developed the catering side of the business in order that the pub could serve pies, burgers and sandwiches on match days. He had also started to run and organise a car park near Piccadilly Railway Station in Manchester city centre that is linked to the pub via a mini-bus service. Car park spaces and transports to and from the pub/stadium are sold at £5 on the basis of 'no delay in getting away'. Since our visit in 2003, the landlord has opened a MCFC branded Chip Shop in a converted section of his pub to further trade on the club's match-day activities (see above). Clearly this landlord is maximising his opportunities to exploit his proximity to Manchester City's new home.

This landlord is not the only businessperson in East Manchester to re-brand his business to exploit its proximity to the CoMS. Other pubs in the East Manchester area, and other businesses such as sandwich shops, have undertaken various forms of re-branding to affect a connection with the CoMS in general, and MCFC in particular. One pub in Beswick has recently changed its name to 'The Stadium', whilst another has become 'The Kippax' in honour of the old popular standing terrace at the Maine Road stadium. The Bradford pub had a completely new pub sign, depicting the club crest, installed.

The re-branding of local businesses in East Manchester for a new football-supporting clientele is being met with a mix of concern and ambivalence amongst local residents and business uses. The landlord of the pub that is located in the direct vicinity of the CoMS explained to the research team that his 'regulars':

might moan on a match-day 'cos it's crowded, but mostly they just don't come down. We've not lost any regulars though. Quite a few of them come down at half-time, which is a bit of a surprise. I mean, some of them say we should have a separate room for them, but you can't do that (East Manchester Businessperson, Interview, November 2003).

The landlord went on to say that he had not noticed any particular problems between 'locals' and football supporters, and that he did not necessarily anticipate any in the future. However, others in the area have said that local residents had 'fallen out' with the landlord and that there were not good relations; and also that there had been complaints about the chip shop opening recently. It is notable that we have also been told that some pubs in the area have not opened, despite refurbishment, because of local intimidation; and another was 'being effectively run' by people associated with the black economy and even former 'hooligans'. We are unable to comment on the veracity of these claims.

Whilst some East Manchester businesses, and especially local pubs, are enjoying the benefits of their new proximity to the COMS and MCFC, others do not appear to have improved their business performance to any significant degree. The research team visited one local sandwich and cake shop to see whether it had enjoyed increased business since the arrival of MCFC in the local area. Despite marketing pies, burgers, hot dogs, and hot and cold drinks to football supporters on match-days, a member of staff from the business informed us that business had been 'very up and down' since the beginning of the football season. She explained:

Some [match-]days we get a rush, and other days we just about cover the wages. It's hard to predict. We get all this food in and you might end up throwing it away (East Manchester Businessperson, Interview, November 2003)

The owner of the business went on to describe how he had had high expectations of increased business at the start of the football season, but that his hopes had proved to be unfounded:

the first home game was the biggest joke. I took on seven girls and got in all these pies and pasties and we were stood around all day and had to chuck the lot away (East Manchester Businessperson, Interview, November 2003)

Interestingly, staff at this business suggested that the shop's relative isolation and the general lack of other businesses in the local area might be precluding football supporters from using the area in pre- and post-match periods. Their business premises is not particularly close to many other shops or public houses, although it is located on one of the main thoroughfares to the CoMS.

In addition to questioning East Manchester businesses about the informal economic benefits that they might accrue from their proximity to the CoMS, the research team also enquired about any formal relations that might have emerged between local businesses and MCFC since summer 2003. One pub landlord stated to us that the club had not contacted him in any way, and that he was 'not sure why they would have anything to do with us to be honest' (East Manchester Businessperson, Interview, November 2003). When we spoke to MCFC personnel about this issue, however, they insisted that they had organised a working relationship with a number of local businesses, especially around issues of potential nuisance created by match-day activities. A number of businesses located in direct proximity to the COMS, including the Asda Walmart store and a Mercedes Garage, were mentioned in this regard as they were most likely to suffer problems with illegal parking and concern over access

to their premises on match days. The club stated that they wanted to create a good working relationship with their business neighbours around the Sportcity site, and wanted local businesses to contact club staff if they had any concerns about club operations.

In addition to establishing a good relationship with local businesses over issues of nuisance, MCFC staff also stated that they hoped to utilise local businesses wherever possible and thereby support the East Manchester economy, although the extent of this is not clear. The club is already using a local stationary supplier, and club staff claimed that they were planning to improve links with local businesses in a range of fields. This new approach to using and supporting local businesses was presented to the research team as part of a general new club philosophy of integrating MCFC into the local community. The extent to which this is an aspiration rather than actually happening is not clear and at least one local agency said that they wanted to see greater efforts by the club, in partnership with other agencies and businesses in the area to develop this area in the coming months and years.

MCFC is also benefiting the East Manchester economy through the provision of sixteen 'MCFC Accredited Car Parks' that are located at a range of business and non-business sites around the COMS. Businesses, schools and a range of other institutions provide MCFC with space for formally accredited car parks on match days and receive a percentage of payments in return, as does the NDC, who takes a percentage for community grants. This benefits local businesses and other institutions by providing them with additional income, whilst also helping local residents and supporters by ensuring that sufficient off-street parking is available on match days.

However, contrary to MCFC's new stated approach of supporting the local economy, the club has also restricted local trade, either directly or indirectly, since its arrival in East Manchester in at least two ways. Firstly, the club has decided to reduce the amount of 'local' advertising in the CoMS as it has decided that the stadium should be 'dressed' in very specific ways. A member of MCFC staff stated that this decision had been made to ensure that advertising space in the stadium could demand the highest value. He also stated that a stadium that contains only a select number of high-quality national or international advertisers is better placed to maintain its aesthetic symmetry:

we actually took a deliberate step to have fewer advertisers within the stadium... we've given up a lot of what you would have been in other stadiums... We've got our own branding in place and we wanted to keep the look and the feel of the stadium, we wanted to keep it top class so we've done away with a lot of the local suppliers advertising boards... which increases the value in the spaces we are able to offer (IH Interview 2004).

Secondly, MCFC, in association with Manchester City Council, New East Manchester Ltd and New Deal for Communities has decided to prohibit street trading in the vicinity of the CoMS. This means that food vans, and fixed stalls selling MCFC-related merchandise are not available around the stadium on match days. This decision was taken officially because of the perceived nuisance that street traders, and particularly food vans, would cause for local residents. However, MCFC has taken the opportunity to license a number of food vans itself that now trade on the Sportcity site

on match days. As far as the research team is aware, other food van operators have not been offered the opportunity to trade in this area.

Conclusion

From the information provided above, it is clear that few dramatic changes have occurred in terms of the number and types of businesses in the immediate vicinity during MCFC's first year of residence at the stadium. Some businesses have moved to the area to trade on the football club's match-day activities, whilst others have been re-branded to exploit their proximity to the stadium and the club. Not all of these businesses, however, have been successful, and some have closed or changed in their first year of operation. This, coupled with a rise in empty business properties in the research team's survey areas, suggests that MCFC's residence at the CoMS is not yet producing a 'boom', nor 'bust' for most small businesses in East Manchester.

5.3 The Effects of The Stadium Move on Manchester City Supporter ‘Communities’

The research team has investigated the effect of MCFC’s stadium move on the club’s supporters in two principal ways.

- **Qualitative Information**

We have interviewed and observed various supporters of MCFC to gather opinions about the move, and information on how it affected the plethora of ‘supporter communities’ that exist around the club. This comprises sections i) and iii), below.

- **Statistical Mapping**

We have mapped datasets held by the club to study the changing geographic and socio-economic profile of MCFC’s supporters between the 2002/03 and 2003/04 football seasons. This is included in ii), below.

5.3.1 Fans and Leaving Maine Road

The idea of community is often associated with the notion of ‘home’ and so in thinking about the impact of the stadium move on supporter communities it is worth reflecting on the extent to which stadiums can be regarded as a kind of periodic ‘home’ and the associated set of emotions and experiences that go with moving from that ‘home’. Throughout the 2002/03 season, culminating on the 11 May 2003 when Manchester City Football Club played their last competitive game at Maine Road before the move to the new City of Manchester stadium, we spent time with supporters, attended matches and visited the Maine Road area in order to get a sense of these emotions. Rather than just marking a change of venue, the club’s departure invoked powerful feelings attached to notions of nostalgia, belonging, ‘family’ and ‘home’, alongside an institutional response driven by both a sense of corporate responsibility and commercial opportunity.

According to John Bale (2000) the psychological benefits to be derived from football have led stadiums to be seen by some as a source of topophilia - a place of love (Yi-Fu Tuan, 1974) which can evoke strong sentiments and attachment. In this context, referring to the work of Mackay on the feelings of Hibernian supporters for ‘their’ Easter Road stadium, it is suggested that moving to a new ground would ‘be like losing someone in the family’ (Mackay, 1995: 35), a sentiment which it is suggested typifies ‘the strength of feeling that can be attached to a football ground as a place, an emotional tie which can take the stadium beyond a simple functional space for the production of football matches’ (Bale, 2000:92). Indeed stadiums are also seen as a source of ‘geographical memories’ which serve as ‘a reference that triggers wider memories of friends, relatives and people’ (Hague & Mercer, 1998).

Accordingly, pointing to a local conservatism amongst supporters and football administrators, Bale argues that the dislocation of clubs from the places that bear their name is anathema to fans and something British football clubs have tended to avoid in reflection of this local sentiment, place pride or topophilia. Nevertheless he recognises that this situation remains at odds with the financial realities of contemporary football which in Manchester City’s case now emphasised the elevation of the commercial interests of the club over nostalgic sentiment.

Whilst the 'last' game at Maine Road was not played until the final day of the 2002/03 Premier League campaign, the build up to the event was a feature of the entire season with an emphasis placed on new beginnings as much as endings. The tensions were exemplified on the morning of the match with Southampton when Stuart Hall expressed his exasperation to BBC Radio 5Live that the team manager Kevin Keegan had played down the significance of the event. Hall, himself a City fan, who had been reporting on matches for the BBC for decades, was associating Keegan with the 'new' Labour obsession with everything 'new' and their lack of sense of nostalgia when for him this was a *moment* for nostalgia.

But the nostalgia of fans more generally seemed in marked contrast to that of the club and the expectant media, and was characterised by a mixture of apprehensiveness and ambivalence. A 40 year old female fan activist with the Chorlton Blues commented 'I'm not really looking forward to it. It'll be a bit weird really'. On the BBC lunchtime match preview programme *Football Focus* on Saturday 10 May, the club's most celebrated 'fan', Oasis band leader Noel Gallagher, was interviewed and reflected that it was time for a move and that 'It's like moving house and we've all done that. Give it a few years and it will feel like home'. This point was re-enforced later that afternoon in the Trevor Arms pub in Chorlton by a committed City fan in his late 30s who castigated 'That ol' shithole. Won't miss that', before talking with pride about the magnificence of the new stadium.

In no sense was this ambivalence seen to detract from the widespread desire amongst fans to mark the leaving of Maine Road. The final match was sold out long in advance and the streets surrounding the ground were buzzing early in the day in a manner that was all out of proportion with the 'normal' conventions of a match day. This 'celebration' extended beyond the fan community to local residents and entrepreneurs who engaged with the 'event' by coming on to the streets and selling Caribbean cuisine from barbeques alongside the more conventional and well patronised chip shops.

The local pubs were mobbed with fans dressed in fancy dress with no particular theme – Vikings, brides, Elvis, Nuns, Ronald McDonald, Andy Pandy. Nostalgic reference points were visible in the form of inflatable yellow bananas - a hallmark of City fandom and inspiration for the 'inflatable' craze of the late 1980s - along with an elderly hawker selling rosettes and city cloth caps evoking a more distant past. Amidst the crowds on Maine Road, a festival like atmosphere prevailed with cameras and videos ubiquitous as fans recorded the moment for posterity. Others had made the extra effort and arrived in stretch limos, drinking champagne with heads stuck out of sunroofs as a brass band played outside the ticket office.

The atmosphere was, however, affected by a latent and largely unspoken conflict amidst rival claims being made as to whose celebration this was, which was reflected in the tensions between going into the 'official' locations of legitimate support - the ground - and staying in the alternative unofficial zones of supporter culture - the pub and the street. Even in the ground, the enclosed, tatty and cramped bar areas under the Main Stand were packed with those getting their last pints in. The beer sold out in the North and Main stands - the need for celebration among fans and commercial gain for the club, making a mockery of both legislation and attempts to limit drinking among fans. This was partly a reflection of the extent to which the fans own performances, in

the form of ritualised singing and flag displays, were increasingly drowned out by the PA and organised events as former legends Colin Bell, 'Big' Malcolm Allison and Joe Mercer's wife Nora were introduced and brought onto the pitch to greet the players.

Within the ground it appeared to many that the fans were being denied the opportunity to express an intensity of emotion and sentiment through the more instrumental, corporatised efforts of the club to orchestrate the occasion. The club had for some time been engaged in a carefully planned exercise designed to mark the club's departure. For much of the season hoardings had been erected inside the ground on the Kippax stand declaring 'End of an era Maine Road 1923-2003' alongside the First Advice sponsor's logo. The 'corporate nostalgia' this implied was a pre-cursor for the end of season events.

After the final game, which ended in a drab defeat with the earlier sunshine now replaced by rain, a 'party' went ahead almost because it had been organised rather than through any spontaneous show of emotion. There appeared to be a disjuncture between the institutional imperative to mark the occasion and the traditions of the fan communities who had come to share memories which seemed curiously at odds with the tightly managed, hierarchical event staged by the club. Whilst some fans left the ground straight away, the volume of the public address system dominated proceedings whilst a stage was erected before the MC job was handed over to Radio 1 DJ Mark Radcliffe. He introduced a series of bands with tenuous links to the club who were dismissed by mystified fans, some of whom sang the club anthem 'Blue Moon' and the more disparaging 'Shall we sing a song for you'. Others stood around reading programmes and gazing blankly. By far the biggest ovation was given to the boxer Ricky Hatton, more readily recognised as one of the fans 'own', a 'true' City supporting Manc. Although there were undoubtedly some fans who enjoyed the display, the overwhelming attitude was one of ambivalence.

Ultimately fireworks and bunting were set off before Status Quo came on the PA system and what was left of the crowd instinctively made for the exits knowing the party was over. Fans had been drifting out throughout the proceedings, most turning around for a final glance at the stadium and shaking hands to say goodbye to neighbours, although often in an uneasy, disconnected and even distant manner. Despite the build up, this was no wake, rather the event seemed to reflect a misrecognition of what the day meant to the fans in the face of a requirement to preserve the pitch for future corporate 'ending' events and the stands and seats for an auction and sale of facilities which took place on Sunday 13 July, providing a further opportunity to hold on to a piece of 'history'. The traditional end of season pitch invasion did not happen due to increased levels of policing and stewarding.

In spite of Manchester City's claims to speak of the 'end of an era' - celebrated in the production of memorial books, souvenir programmes, videos, the auction and the events that marked the last game, Maine Road lives on in the vernacular of supporters, their memories and notions of 'Cityness'. It is in this context that the 'end' emerges as a powerful tool with which to re-imagine the club's own 'immortality'. Whilst providing an opportunity to empathise with fans and their emotional attachments to their former ground, their memories and their sense of 'Cityness', the 'ending' had more than a physical feel - it is metaphoric of the ending of 'old' City and the birth of a 'new' City.

This, of course, is also happening within the City of Manchester, which is being re-imaged and re-marketed as 'new', modern and vibrant: a strategy in which the successful building of the stadium and staging of the Commonwealth Games are key elements. Alongside this new metropolitanism sits the remnants of the old, and the effect of the decline of Manchester's old industrial self, not least in the persistent poverty and deprivation which Sportcity seeks to partly address (Manchester Evening News 24 July 2003: 'Our Sporting Chance'). The 'new' Manchester City, like the 'new' City of Manchester, is re-imagined not as backward looking, but as forward looking and progressive, which given the heavily managed nature of the 're-branding' might ultimately be seen to deny the stake that fans have as the guardian of the club's traditions.

However, in the context of the club's new 'home' these competing visions of City's identity and the formations of community associated with it have risen up in the spaces occupied by City fans on match days. Beyond the stadium itself a number of local pubs have, as discussed in the previous section, re-defined themselves in homage to the nostalgia of Maine Road. The old 'Gibraltar' pub on Grimshaw Lane has been renamed 'The Kippax' whilst Mary D's Beamish House on Greymare Lane opposite the stadium has emerged as the focal point for many City fans before matches. This is a pub that has the feel of a community centre or social club which evokes a sense of communal space akin to that of the terraced ends of pre-Hillsborough stadiums rather than the isolation of more contemporary bars or the soft furnishings of traditional pubs which might be associated with the feel of the seated stand or executive box.

As if to emphasise the point, the function room at the rear has a giant mural of Maine Road painted on one wall which the landlord suggests was commissioned by a local artist 'to bring a bit of the old Maine Road here 'cos no one wanted to go really so we've just brought a bit of home here to try and make people feel at home'. A point emphasised by the words posted on one fan web site 'If you don't remember Maine Road your [sic] a long way from home' (www.coolasduck.co.uk).

5.3.2 Statistical Mapping of the Changing Profile and Location of MCFC Supporters between 2002/03 and 2003/04

To produce information on changes amongst MCFC's supporters between 2002/03 and 2003/04, the research team mapped two datasets from the club: season ticket holders and club members. We originally wished to also analyse changes amongst the club's junior members, but this was not possible as MCFC was unable to extract the required data as a result of a recent computing system change at the club.

MCFC had 24,106 season ticket holders and 17,541 members in 2002/03, and of these we have successfully mapped 22,442 season ticket holders (93.1%) and 15,876 members (90.51%). In 2003/04 the club had 36,654 season ticket holders and 16,373 members, and of these we have successfully mapped 34,488 season ticket holders (94.09%) and 14,930 members (91.19%).

From the information above, it can be seen that MCFC had 12,548 more season ticket holders in 2003/04 than it did in 2002/03: an increase of 52.05%. This was a result of the club's move to the City of Manchester stadium, which has a larger capacity (48,000) than the old Maine Road stadium (36,000). During the same period, the club lost 1,168 members: a fall of 6.66%. This was probably a result of club members taking up new opportunities to purchase season tickets.

If we consider the geographical distribution of MCFC supporters, our analysis indicates that in 2002/03 75.14% (16,864) of MCFC's season ticket holders lived in Greater Manchester.⁹ In 2003/04 this figure had fallen marginally by 0.99 percentage points to 74.15% (25,573). In 2002/03, 44.39% (7,048) of the club's members lived in Greater Manchester. However, in 2003/04 this figure had risen by 19.92 percentage points to 64.31% (9,601). This shows that the national/regional distribution of MCFC's season ticket holders remained consistent over the period of the stadium move, whilst the club's members became notably more concentrated in the Greater Manchester area.

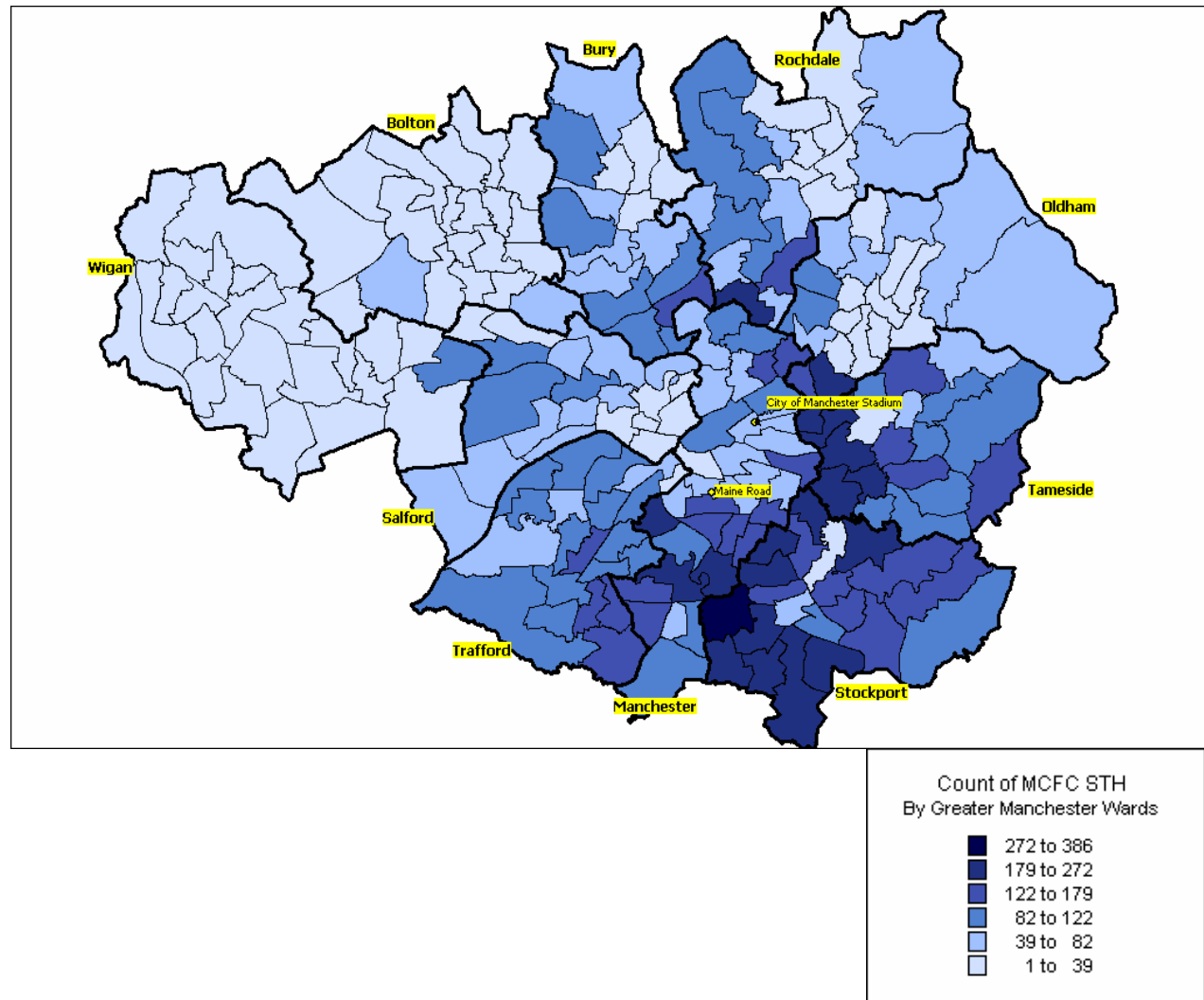
To provide a more detailed analysis of the changing distribution of MCFC's supporters between 2002/03 and 2003/04, it is instructive to consider the breakdown of the club's season ticket holders and members across Greater Manchester. Table 5.3 shows the number of MCFC season ticket holders across Greater Manchester in 2002/03 and 2003/04 (see also Maps 5.3 and 5.4). The table shows that the greatest 'number' increases in club season ticket holders occurred in Manchester (1,820), Stockport (1,730), Tameside (1,347), and Trafford (1,073). It also shows that the greatest 'percentage' increases in MCFC season ticket holders occurred in Oldham (63.75%), Tameside (54.29%), Manchester (53.58%), and Bury (52.69%).

DISTRICT	ST – 2002/03	ST – 2003/04	No. CHANGE	% CHANGE
Bolton	365	541	176	48.22
Bury	1169	1785	616	52.69
Manchester	3397	5217	1820	53.58
Oldham	1084	1775	691	63.75
Rochdale	1250	1875	625	50
Salford	1021	1494	473	46.33
Stockport	3586	5316	1730	48.24
Tameside	2481	3828	1347	54.29
Trafford	2125	3198	1073	50.50
Wigan	386	544	158	40.93

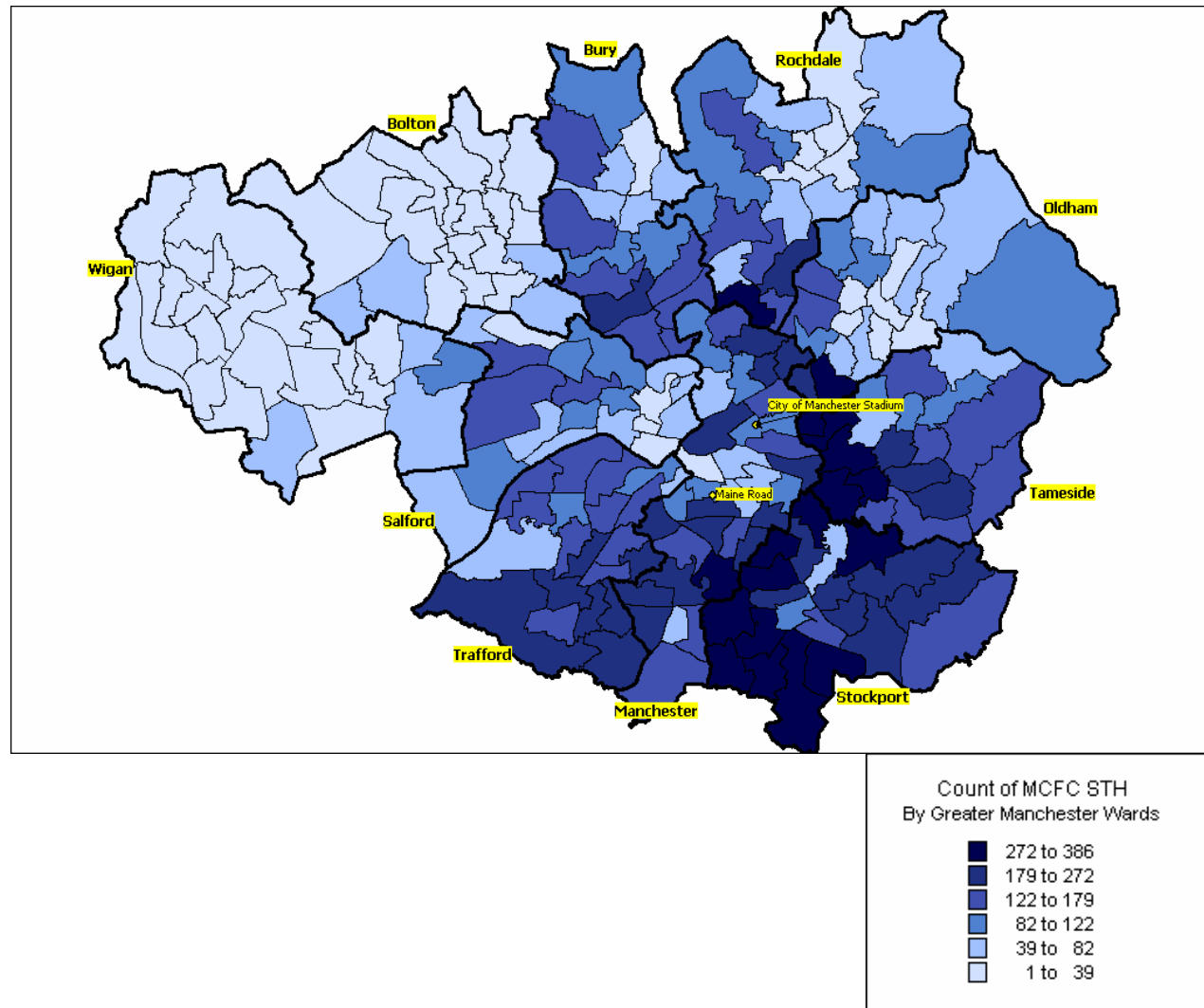
Table 5.3: Numbers of MCFC Season Ticket Holders in Greater Manchester – 2002/03 and 2003/04

In Tables 5.4 and 5.5 we can see the changing distribution of MCFC season ticket holders across Greater Manchester in 2002/03 and 2003/04. Table 5.4 shows that in 2002/03, Stockport (3,586), Manchester (3,397) and Tameside (2,481) had the most MCFC season ticket holders in Greater Manchester. It also shows that these three districts had respectively 15.98%, 15.14% and 11.06% of MCFC's total season ticket support in 2002/03.

⁹ All figures from here on are based on the numbers of 'mapped' MCFC season ticket holders and members.



Map 5.3: MCFC Season Ticket Holders by Greater Manchester Ward – 2002/03



Map 5.4: MCFC Season Ticket Holders by Greater Manchester Ward – 2003/04

DISTRICT	MCFC ST – 2002/03	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL
Stockport	3586	15.98
Manchester	3397	15.14
Tameside	2481	11.06
Trafford	2125	9.47
Rochdale	1250	5.57
Bury	1169	5.21
Oldham	1084	4.83
Salford	1021	4.55
Wigan	386	1.72
Bolton	365	1.63

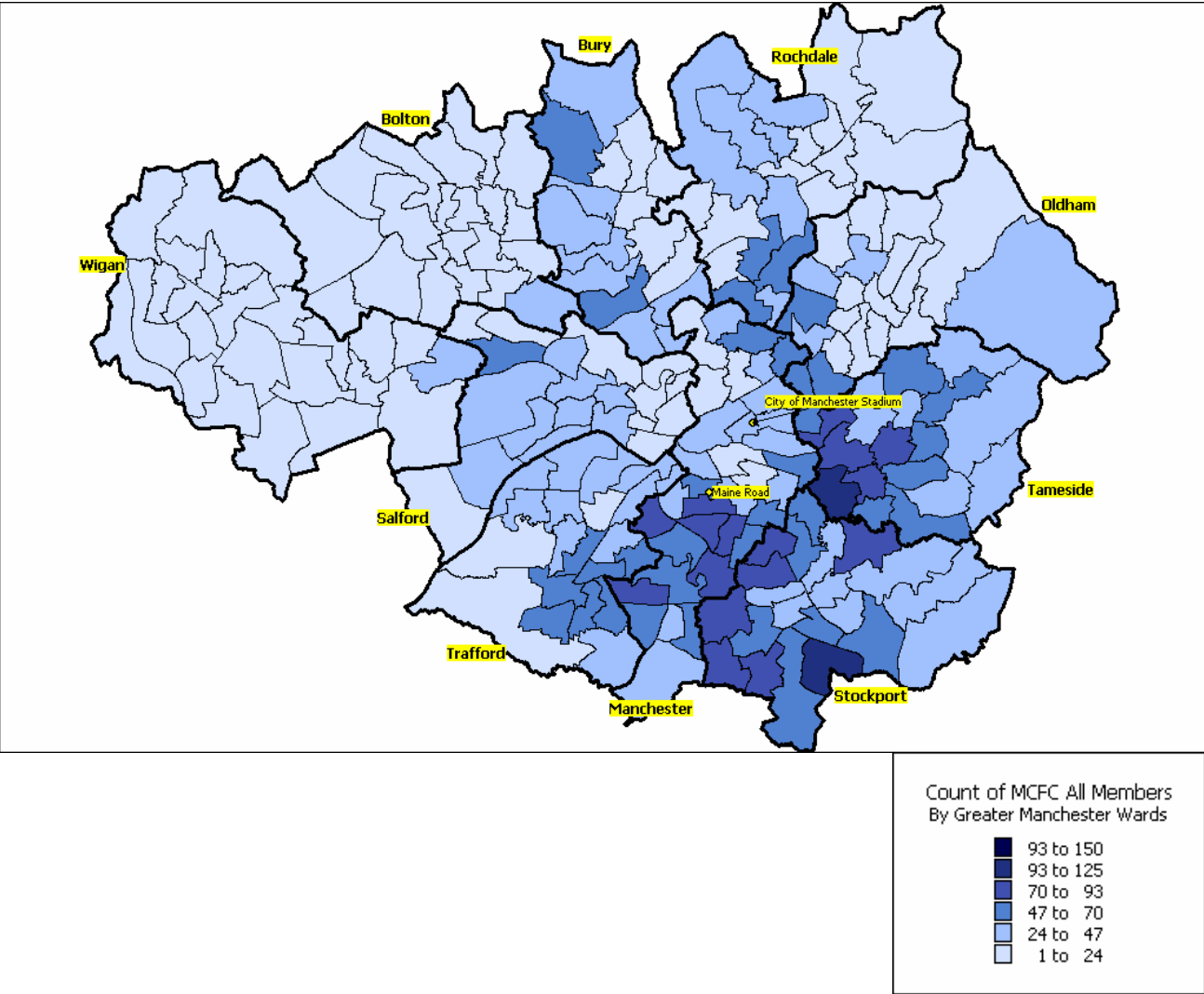
Table 5.4: The Distribution of MCFC Season Ticket Holders: Greater Manchester – 2002/03

Table 5.5 shows the increased numbers of MCFC season ticket holders across the districts of Greater Manchester in 2003/04. It also shows how the distribution of season tickets across Greater Manchester remained remarkably consistent across 2002/03 and 2003/04. For instance, the percentage of MCFC season ticket holders that lived in Stockport in 2003/04 was only 0.57% lower than the figure in 2002/03. This pattern of small changes was repeated across the region.

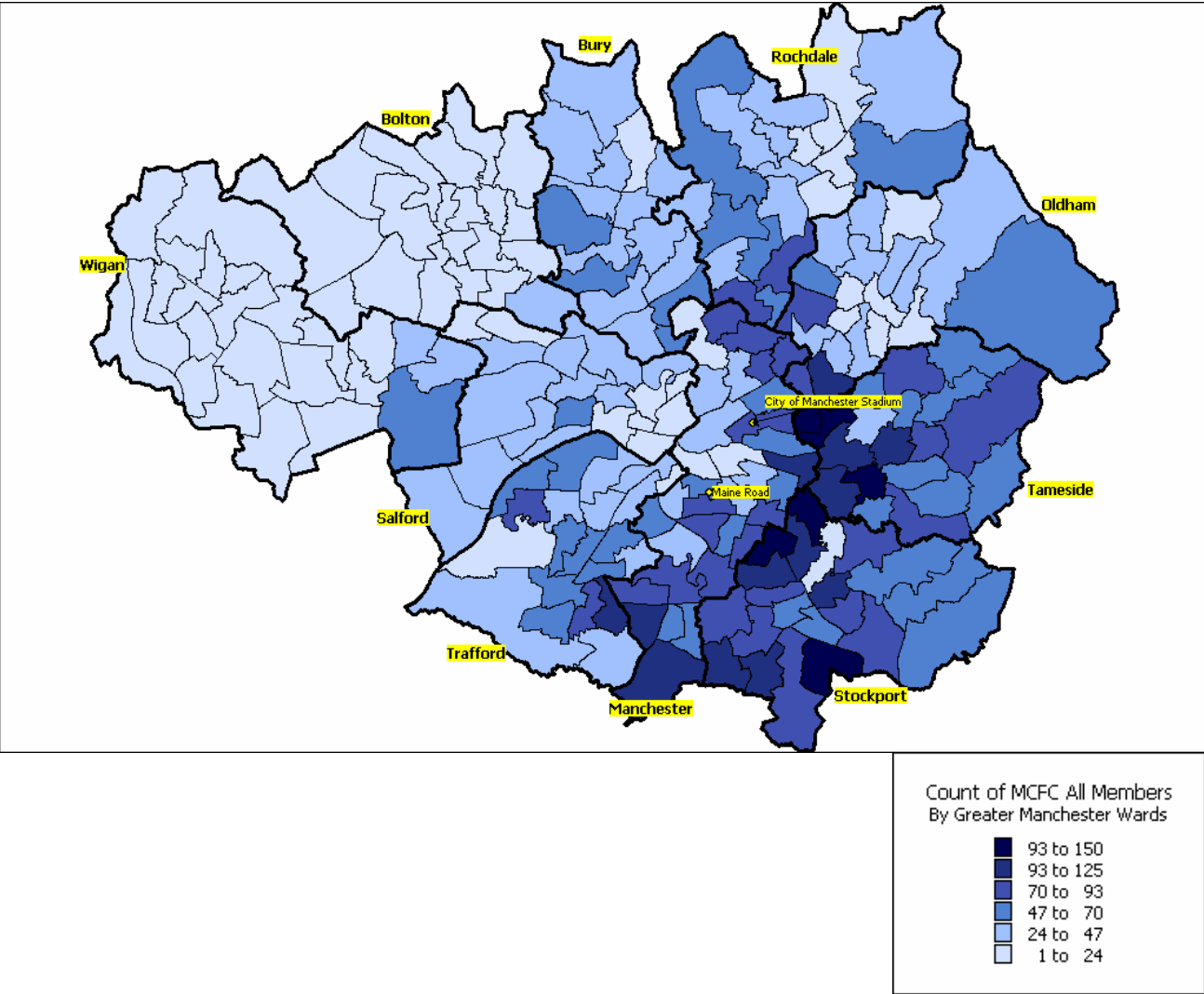
DISTRICT	MCFC ST – 2003/04	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL
Stockport	5316	15.41
Manchester	5217	15.13
Tameside	3828	11.1
Trafford	3198	9.27
Rochdale	1875	5.44
Bury	1785	5.17
Oldham	1775	5.15
Salford	1494	4.33
Wigan	544	1.58
Bolton	541	1.57

Table 5.5: The Distribution of MCFC Season Ticket Holders: Greater Manchester – 2003/04

If attention is now turned to MCFC's members, Table 5.6 shows the number of MCFC members across Greater Manchester in 2002/03 and 2003/04 (see also Maps 5.5 and 5.6). The table shows that the greatest 'number' increases in club members occurred in Stockport (530), Tameside (528), Manchester (454), and Oldham (220). It also shows that the greatest 'percentage' increases in MCFC members occurred in Oldham (54.33%), Tameside (49.39%), Wigan (45.76%), and Stockport (43.09%).



Map 5.5: MCFC Members by Greater Manchester Ward – 2002/03



Map 5.6: MCFC Members by Greater Manchester Ward – 2003/04

DISTRICT	MEM – 2002/03	MEM – 2003/04	No. CHANGE	% CHANGE
Bolton	174	200	26	14.94
Bury	486	633	147	30.25
Manchester	1577	2031	454	28.79
Oldham	497	767	270	54.33
Rochdale	538	759	221	41.08
Salford	454	570	116	25.55
Stockport	1230	1760	530	43.09
Tameside	1069	1597	528	49.39
Trafford	846	1026	180	21.28
Wigan	177	258	81	45.76

Table 5.6: Numbers of MCFC Members in Greater Manchester – 2002/03 and 2003/04

In Tables 5.7 and 5.8 we can see the changing distribution of MCFC members across Greater Manchester in 2002/03 and 2003/04. Table 5.7 shows that in 2002/03, Manchester (1,577), Stockport (1,230) and Tameside (1,069) had the most MCFC members in Greater Manchester. It also shows that these three districts had respectively 9.93%, 7.75% and 6.73% of MCFC's total members in 2002/03.

DISTRICT	MEM – 2002/03	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL
Manchester	1577	9.93
Stockport	1230	7.75
Tameside	1069	6.73
Trafford	846	5.33
Rochdale	538	4.18
Oldham	497	3.13
Bury	486	3.06
Salford	454	2.86
Wigan	177	1.11
Bolton	174	1.1

Table 5.7: The Distribution of MCFC Members: Greater Manchester – 2002/03

Table 5.8 shows the increased numbers of MCFC members across the districts of Greater Manchester in 2003/04. It also shows how the distribution of the club's members became more concentrated in Greater Manchester between 2002/03 and 2003/04. The City of Manchester, for instance, was home to 13.6% of MCFC's total membership in 2003/04: a 3.67 percentage point rise on the previous year. The same phenomenon occurred across Greater Manchester, including in Stockport where 11.79% of MCFC members lived in 2003/04: a 4.04 percentage point rise on 2002/03. The other notable change in MCFC's Greater Manchester membership occurred in Oldham where an increase of 270 members in 2003/04 saw it move above Rochdale as the district with the 5th largest number of MCFC members in Greater Manchester.

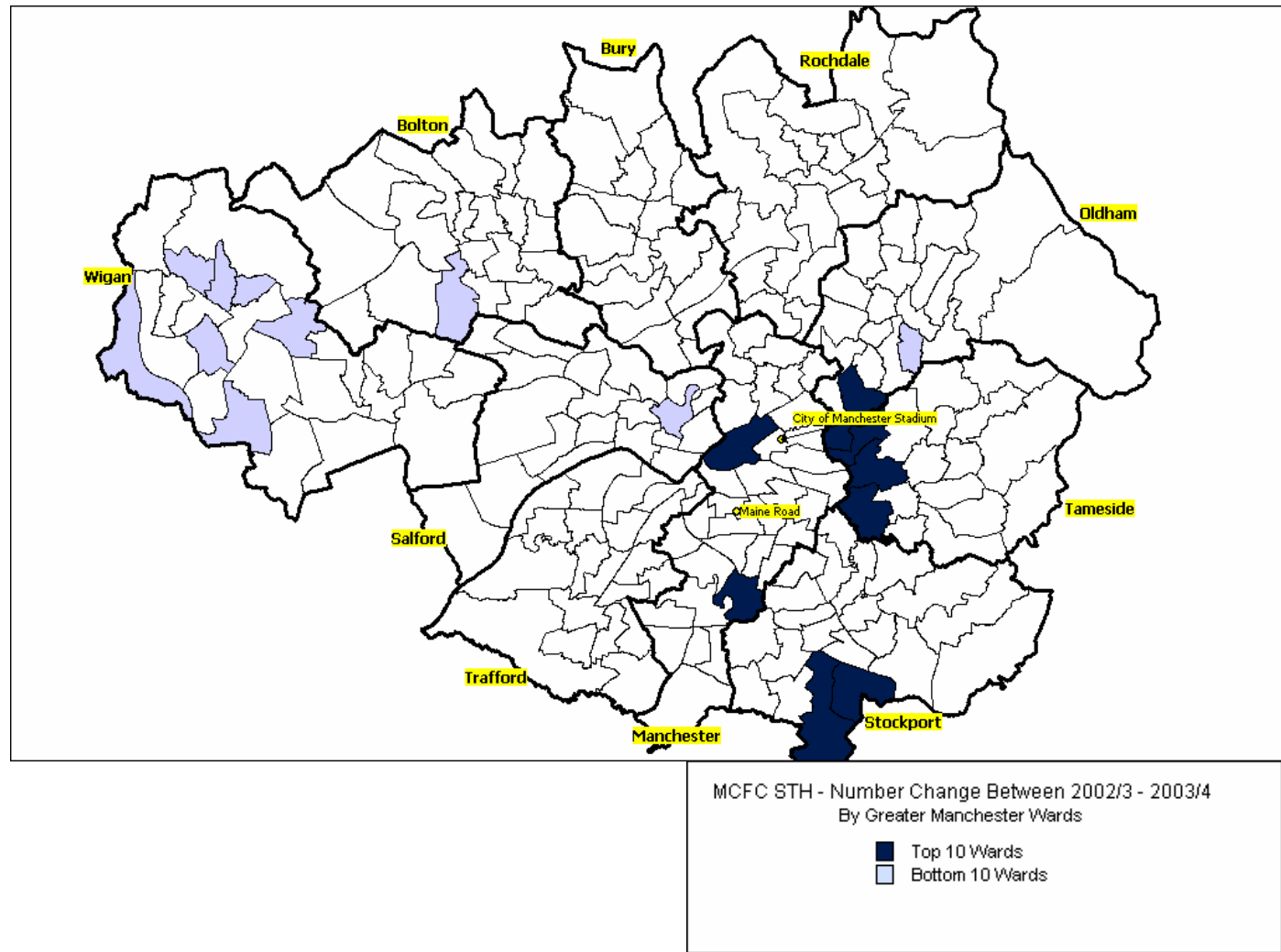
DISTRICT	MEM – 2003/04	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL
Manchester	2031	13.6
Stockport	1760	11.79
Tameside	1597	10.7
Trafford	1026	6.87
Oldham	767	5.14
Rochdale	759	5.08
Bury	633	4.24
Salford	570	3.82
Wigan	258	1.73
Bolton	200	1.34

Table 5.8: The Distribution of MCFC Members: Greater Manchester – 2003/04

In addition to considering the changing distribution of MCFC supporters across the districts of Greater Manchester, it is also instructive to analyse wards in the region that have experienced the most and least dramatic shifts in MCFC season ticket holders and members between 2002/03 and 2003/04. Table 5.9 shows the 10 Greater Manchester wards that experienced the **largest increases in MCFC season ticket holders** in 2003/04 (see Map 5.7). It indicates that 4 of the wards are in Tameside, 3 are in Stockport, 2 are in Manchester, and 1 is in Oldham. These are all areas of strong traditional support for MCFC.

DISTRICT	WARD	ST - 2002/03	ST - 2003/04	No. CHANGE	% CHANGE	NATIONAL IMD % RANK
Tameside	Droylsden West	183	331	148	80.87	18.62
Stockport	East Bramhall	191	339	148	77.49	97.02
Tameside	Droylsden East	243	386	143	58.85	21.00
Oldham	Failsworth East	193	334	141	73.06	28.58
Tameside	Audenshaw	232	366	134	57.76	26.76
Manchester	Didsbury	249	382	133	53.41	62.11
Stockport	West Bramhall	227	353	126	55.51	96.29
Tameside	Denton West	208	330	122	58.65	40.00
Manchester	Central	98	219	121	123.47	0.49
Stockport	Heald Green	195	313	118	60.51	61.90

Table 5.9: Change in Numbers of MCFC Season Ticket Holders between 2002/03 and 2003/04 - Top 10 Greater Manchester Wards



Map 5.7: Number Changes in MCFC Season Ticket Holders between 2002/03 and 2003/04: Greater Manchester Wards - Top 10 and Bottom 10

In addition to information on numbers of MCFC season ticket holders resident in each ward, Table 5.9 also shows data from the 2000 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). This was a national deprivation survey carried out by the then Department for Environment, Trade and the Regions (DETR) which aimed to provide statistical evidence on health, income, employment, education and a range of other forms of deprivation across England.

Table 5.9 shows that the majority of the 10 Greater Manchester wards to experience the largest increases in MCFC season ticket holders in 2003/04 are not, according to the IMD report, suffering from significant levels of deprivation. Only one ward – Central Manchester – is listed as being in the top 1% of deprived wards nationally, and this ward is home to a large number of national and multinational corporations that may have purchased new MCFC season tickets. Of the other wards, only 4 are in the top 30% of deprived wards nationally, whilst 2 are in the top 4% of *least* deprived wards in England. This reinforces our previous findings that large numbers of MCFC’s season ticket holders are not resident in areas of high deprivation.

Table 5.10 shows the 10 Greater Manchester wards that experienced the **smallest increases (or decreases) in MCFC season ticket holders** in 2003/04 (see again Map 5.7). The table indicates that 6 of the wards are in Wigan, 2 are in Bolton, 1 is in Oldham, and 1 is in Salford. These are not traditionally strong areas for MCFC support, with the exception of Oldham.

DISTRICT	WARD	ST - 2002/03	ST - 2003/04	No. CHANGE	% CHANGE	NATIONAL IMD % RANK
Wigan	Beech Hill	6	8	2	33.33%	16.88
Bolton	Derby	1	3	2	200.00%	1.63
Wigan	Hindley	9	11	2	22.22%	14.69
Wigan	Swinley	17	19	2	11.76%	35.44
Bolton	Daubhill	14	15	1	7.14%	15.63
Wigan	Whelley	2	3	1	50.00%	14.55
Wigan	Worsley Mesnes	1	2	1	100.00%	17.11
Wigan	Orrell	11	11	0	0.00%	29.69
Oldham	Alexandra	13	12	-1	-7.69%	0.99
Salford	Pendleton	20	19	-1	-5.00%	2.39

Table 5.10: Change in Numbers of MCFC Season Ticket Holders between 2002/03 and 2003/04 - Bottom 10 Greater Manchester Wards

Table 5.10 again includes information from the 2000 IMD report. The table shows that 3 of the 10 Greater Manchester wards to experience the smallest increases (or decreases) in MCFC season ticket holders in 2003/04 are in the top 3% of deprived wards nationally. A further 5 of the wards are in the top 20% of deprived wards, and the remaining 2 are in the top 36%. This shows that Greater Manchester wards that experienced small increases (or decreases) in MCFC season ticket holders in 2003/04 are suffering from higher levels of deprivation than wards that experienced large increases.

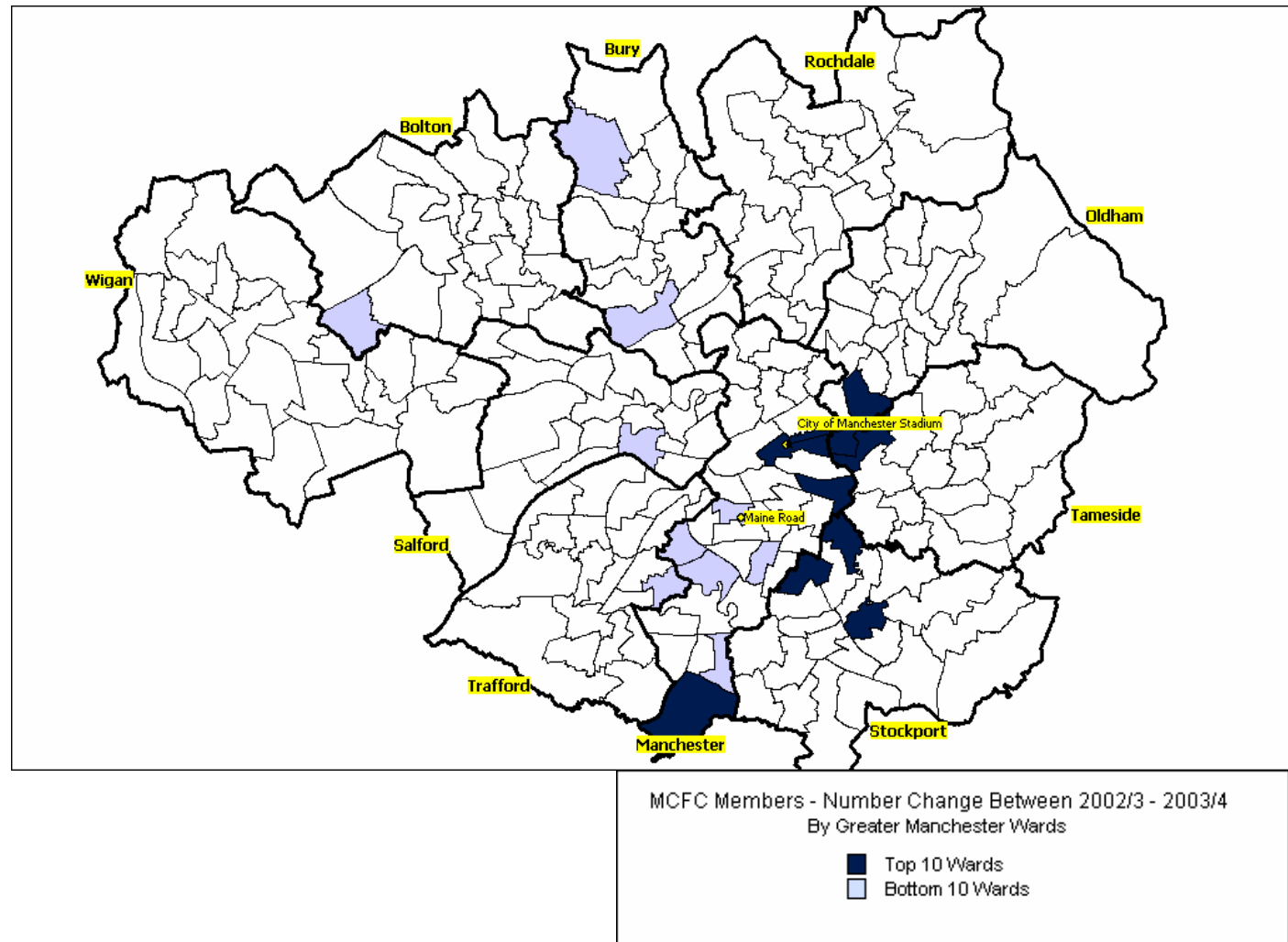
If we now move on to MCFC members, Table 5.11 shows the 10 Greater Manchester wards that experienced the **largest increases in MCFC membership** in 2003/04 (see Map 5.8). The table indicates that 4 of the wards are in Manchester, 3 are in Stockport, 2 are in Tameside, and 1 is in Oldham. As stated earlier, all of these areas play host to a strong traditional support for MCFC.

DISTRICT	WARD	MEM - 2002/03	MEM - 2003/04	No. CHANGE	% CHANGE	NATIONAL IMD % RANK
Tameside	Droylsden West	68	149	81	119.12	18.62
Tameside	Droylsden East	70	145	75	107.14	21.00
Stockport	North Reddish	66	138	72	109.09	25.37
Stockport	Heaton Moor	77	138	61	79.22	66.34
Stockport	Manor	46	103	57	123.91	29.24
Manchester	Beswick and Clayton	27	81	54	200.00	0.20
Manchester	Gorton North	53	105	52	98.11	3.83
Manchester	Woodhouse Park	46	98	52	113.04	0.76
Oldham	Failsworth East	59	108	49	83.05	28.58
Manchester	Blackley	29	75	46	158.62	3.10

Table 5.11: Change in Numbers of MCFC Members between 2002/03 and 2003/04 - Top 10 Greater Manchester Wards

It is particularly notable that an increase in MCFC membership occurred in Beswick and Clayton in 2003/04 as this, of course, is the ward in which the City of Manchester Stadium is located. It is also notable that the Gorton North ward experienced an increase in membership as this too is located in East Manchester.

From the IMD data included in Table 5.11, it can be seen that 4 of the 10 Greater Manchester wards to experience the largest increases in MCFC membership in 2003/04 are in the top 4% of deprived wards nationally. A further 5 wards are in the top 30% of derived wards nationally, whilst only 1 ward is in the top 50% of *least* deprived wards. This shows that MCFC made large increases in its membership in 2003/04 in a number of areas of high or significant deprivation. This data supports the research team's finding in its second interim report which stated that football clubs' members tend to emanate from areas of higher deprivation than clubs' season ticket holders.



Map 5.8: Number Changes in MCFC Members between 2002/03 and 2003/04: Greater Manchester Wards - Top 10 and Bottom 10

Table 5.12 shows the 10 Greater Manchester wards that experienced the **largest decreases in MCFC membership** in 2003/04 (see again Map 5.8). The table indicates that 5 of the wards are in Manchester, 2 are in Bury and 1 each are in Bolton, Salford and Trafford. It is interesting that half of the wards are in Manchester as one may have expected increases, rather than decreases, in local MCFC membership at the time of the stadium move. This is particularly true of wards such as Chorlton and Withington, which have traditionally had large numbers of MCFC members. It may be the case, of course, that MCFC supporters in these areas simply relinquished their club memberships in 2003/04 as they purchased newly-available season tickets.

DISTRICT	WARD	MEM - 2002/03	MEM 03/4	No Change	% Change	NATIONAL IMD % RANK
Trafford	Sale Moor	62	39	-23	-37.10%	37.76
Manchester	Chorlton	87	65	-22	-25.29%	33.33
Bury	Pilkington Park	67	46	-21	-31.34%	52.75
Salford	Weaste and Seedley	32	12	-20	-62.50%	6.77
Manchester	Sharston	67	50	-17	-25.37%	3.39
Manchester	Barlow Moor	62	46	-16	-25.81%	11.83
Manchester	Moss Side	65	51	-14	-21.54%	0.87
Manchester	Withington	71	58	-13	-18.31%	34.19
Bury	Tottington	53	41	-12	-22.64%	73.92
Bolton	Westhoughton	21	11	-10	-47.62%	38.31

Table 5.12: Change in Numbers of MCFC Members between 2002/03 and 2003/04 - Bottom 10 Greater Manchester Wards

It is particularly notable that a decrease in MCFC membership occurred in Moss Side in 2003/04 as this, of course, is the ward in which the club's former Maine Road stadium was located. Again, it may be the case that supporters in this ward purchased MCFC season tickets for the 2003/04 football season, but it might also be the case that they no longer wished to attend games after the club's move out of their immediate locale.

From the IMD data included in Table 5.12, it can be seen that 4 of the 10 Greater Manchester wards to experience the largest decreases in MCFC membership in 2003/04 are in the top 12% of deprived wards nationally. The remaining 6 wards, however, are all in the top 70% of least deprived wards nationally. This indicates that MCFC lost members in areas of relatively low deprivation in 2003/04. This may be a result of those members' willingness and ability to purchase newly-available season tickets.

Summary

In summary, it can be stated that MCFC's move to the City of Manchester stadium resulted in a number of important effects for the club's season ticket holders and members. These include:

- A rise in season ticket holders of over 50%
- A fall in members of around 7%
- Little change in the regional/national distribution of season ticket holders

- Little change in the distribution of season ticket holders across Greater Manchester
- A greater concentration of club members in areas across Greater Manchester
- Large increases in the numbers of season ticket holders in traditional MCFC supporting areas in Greater Manchester which are subject to low levels of multiple deprivation
- Small increases (or decreases) in the numbers of season ticket holders in non-traditional MCFC supporting areas in Greater Manchester which are subject to relatively high levels of multiple deprivation
- Large increases in MCFC membership in traditional MCFC supporting areas in Greater Manchester which are subject to relatively high levels of multiple deprivation
- Decreases in MCFC membership in traditional MCFC supporting areas in Greater Manchester which are subject to relatively low levels of multiple deprivation
- This evidence re-emphasises our previous findings that those who most regularly attend football matches come from the less deprived and more wealthy and healthy areas of the city, something which clubs and authorities might need to address if football is to play a full part in strategies for social cohesion.

5.3.3 Fans and the City of Manchester Stadium

The transfer to the new stadium has been, if not traumatic, then certainly disruptive for the majority of fans, despite the overwhelming support the move has been given. This disruption has related to the ways in which fans travel to the stadium, their pre and post-match rituals, ticket and seating arrangements and the atmosphere and sense of shared experience inside the ground.

Location, Travel and Pre-Match Rituals

For the majority of fans, attendance at City matches has always involved the use of some kind of public or private transport because, as we have seen in the last section, the principal locations of City supporters are to be found away from both the Maine Road and East Manchester sites.

Nevertheless the stadium move involved a re-assessment of these arrangements and travel to an area of the city which, for many, was previously seen as alien. In this context many fans travel to the new stadium by car and as such the most widely experienced disruption has come in the form of parking habits. It was previously quite common for supporters to park in the myriad of residential streets which surround Maine Road and to pay a small 'mindere' fee of £1-2 to local youths, whilst others made use of official makeshift car parks in the playgrounds of local schools for a fee of £3.50. At the East Manchester site, there is far less availability and more restrictions on parking in residential areas: something which is supported by the overwhelming majority of local residents and is due to be expanded for the 2004/05 football season. This has in part been alleviated by the provision of MCFC Accredited Car Parks, which charge £5 per car and are based in and around a number of local schools and work places. Profits from these car parks are split between MCFC, Manchester City Council and local regeneration agencies, the latter of which will use proceeds for charity events.

A significant number of fans, as we have seen, also walk to the stadium from the city centre or make use of the connecting bus service from Piccadilly. This generates a vibrant physical and visual presence in this part of East Manchester as the pavements fill up with fans adorned in sky blue replica shirts and branded clothing. At the first game City played at the new stadium, an exhibition match against Barcelona, the wearing by large numbers of fans of the 'new' MCFC replica shirt seemed to fit with the re-branding of the club.

For the 'Chorlton Blues' (a group of fans with which we have been conducting ethnographic work) the move has contributed to a strengthening of ties through their organisation of a travel scheme. Members were encouraged to buy a season ticket for return bus travel direct from The South West Manchester Cricket Club in Chorlton to the stadium. Whilst the cricket club has for some time been the meeting place for Chorlton Blues, the organisation of transport to the stadium has encouraged members to come down and have a drink in the club before boarding the bus. This development has had the consequence of strengthening ties between the supporters branch and the cricket club, as well as between the fans themselves, many of whom previously had their own independent pre-match rituals and meeting points.

On the one hand this development reflects an expression of community and shared experience whilst at the same time it also emphasises the instrumentality that can go with the organised response to change. Indeed prior to the derby match against Manchester United, which kicked off at 2pm, the bus operators were instructed by the Police to be at the ground by 1.15 and it was decided that the bus would depart at 12.00 for a journey that rarely takes longer than 30 minutes. For some, including fans who had paid for a full season of travel, this instrumentality has proved too restrictive, particularly as the bus was originally obliged to park some distance from the stadium. Accordingly, over the course of the season use of the coach declined as individuals found new routes and reverted to meeting friends at pubs in the city centre, closer to the stadium or at the stadium itself. However, the security and dependability of the direct bus service has maintained its appeal to family units travelling with young children especially since the club granted permission to park in the stadium car park, a privilege secured as a direct consequence of the status of the supporters' branch.

This perhaps re-emphasises the differences between the residential communities near football grounds, the wider urban community (Smith and Ingham, 2003) of Manchester and the fan communities which we have mapped in the previous section. As such, approaches to club's 'community' work should not have a singular concept of what that community is, but a more pluralistic approach to the different, contingent and changing formations of community that relate to the football club. To some extent this is recognised, in rhetoric at least, by the club, as one official told us:

there were some very real statements by our chairman and the board about wanting to be a part of the community, not just the local community but Manchester as a whole. One thing they're very proud of is being this club that is sort of seen as, again, it's a glib statement in a way, but you know, the club of the people of Manchester. (MCFC Official, Interview, 2004)

The impossibility of achieving this representativeness of an 'urban community' in a city whose football culture is deeply divided, was emphasised at the first Manchester 'derby' match played at the City of Manchester Stadium, on 14 March 2004. Here, as they have for years, fans of Manchester City and Manchester United contested which club was rightfully seen as the representatives of the city with banners (see below) and songs. Indeed it was notable that Manchester United fans not only questioned the legitimacy of Manchester City to represent the City of Manchester, with chants referring to the high numbers of City fans from Stockport as evidenced in our mapping, but also with new songs about the funding and City's occupancy of the City of Manchester stadium:

'We paid for your home,
We paid for your home,
What a waste of council tax
We paid for your home'

This song was also adapted to question City fans' loyalty and the club's 'need' for a larger stadium with the introduction of the verse 'you don't even go', referring to low attendances at some MCFC cup matches at the CoMS.

This rivalry can be seen as part of a wider ongoing playful, and regularly violent, football fan relationship in Manchester which cannot be ignored when considering the relationship of clubs to their communities and to the wider communities of the city. In this it 'demonstrate[s] the importance of collective local identification, belonging to the city, notions of authenticity in football fandom, relationships of success and local pride' that persist in contemporary fandom (Brown 2004).

However, such events, along with a series of stunts performed by a group of Mancunian United fans (including a mock 'rent book' for the stadium produced by the Red Issue fanzine and a common, derogatory reference to the stadium as 'the council house') also suggest an engagement by fans with the discourses of regeneration and justifications for stadium-building. Attempts by football clubs, particularly in cities where there are such fierce rivalries, to represent the 'people of the city' are never likely to be complete within that city's football fan communities.

Ticket and Seating Arrangements

As part of the preparation for the move to the new stadium, existing season ticket holders were given the opportunity to obtain a seat in an 'equivalent' area at the City of Manchester stadium along with friends and old 'neighbours', as described in Section 4. Many fans took advantage of this option and it is interesting that attachments to particular stands have been carried over despite the dramatically different aesthetics of the new stadium.

Indeed, in the fans vernacular, the stands have in some senses merely been transposed into the new location. The new East Stand is referred to as the 'Main Stand' (although officially named the Colin Bell stand by the club, see below). Opposite this, the West Stand is commonly referred to as the 'Kippax'. More bizarrely, the South Stand has become known by many as the 'North Stand' because of its location alongside the away supporters because this was where the North Stand was at Maine Road and also due to the relocation of former 'North Stand' season ticket holders into this area.

The occupants of this stand stake their claim to the name by routinely singing 'We are the North Stand', re-confirming the importance of the Maine Road heritage to the supporters' identity. The claims from those in the 'Kippax' appear more muted, although the singing of 'We're not really here' during the first match in the new stadium suggested new ironic meanings beyond the meanings invested in the song during City's season in Division Two in 1998/99¹⁰. The strength of identity claims in this area had perhaps already been ameliorated by the disruption of ties and emotional attachments brought on by the re-development of the original Kippax in the mid 1990s.

The naming of the Colin Bell stand was itself problematic as it was the subject of an 'ambush' by rival United fans. Although the club organised an internet vote aimed at City supporters, as to which former great should have their name associated with the stand, the vote was targeted by United fans supporting the idea of the Colin Bell stand. This was a deliberate attempt to create a problem for the club by raising the long standing dispute between Bell and part-owner and former team mate Francis Lee

¹⁰ We believe that this was first sung at a match away to Blackpool in Division Two with the original words: 'We're not really here/Just close your eyes and we're in the Premier League' revised later, surreally, to, 'We're not really here/Just like the fans of the invisible man.'

and, more importantly for most of United's jokers, to result in part of the stadium becoming known as the 'Bell End'. Once the vote for Bell was won, a public row ensued as the club suggested that, because they knew the vote had been 'hi-jacked', they would instead call it the 'Joe Mercer' stand. Complaints from the Bell family eventually saw the Colin Bell Stand installed as the official name (Manchester Evening News, October 7 2003: 'City Snub Bell') despite the continued use of the 'Main Stand' by fans. Again, we see here official attempts by the club to engage with its fan community becoming problematic because of the local football culture.

However, the attempts at replicating the configuration of Maine Road was not popular with all fans:

Me and many others who now sit in tier 2 South Stand, who were once all together in and around R.BLOCK, N.STAND have now been scattered all over the new stand. There are pockets of 5-10 of us all over the place, sitting next to dads, mums, kids, grans and grandads. Where the f#ck have all these new people come from? The old North Stand was never like this! Every time we tryed to get a song going, we got the looks, the comments, "sit down" and no one could be arsed singing. It felt like Old Trafford! What happened with this block for block move? we have people all around us who were NEVER in the North Stand. Why and how have they got other peoples seats? Why has the North Stand, Citys main vocal support for the last few years been diluted, dismanteled and taken apart? ('nspac', Blueview 11 August 2003)

We will return to the issue of atmosphere and 'new fans' later. However for others the expansion to increase family attendance has been more welcome, because the move has also provided opportunities to re-configure old formations at Maine Road and extend networks of family, kinship and community within the stadium. This point has been illustrated in the lower tier of the North Stand where we have been conducting much of our ethnographic work with members of the Chorlton Blues supporter group. Here, one family of City fans has come together which now embraces a brother and sister, sister in law, two daughters and a nephew who are sometimes joined by a father, two other brothers and another nephew who make use of the tickets held by the family's extended friendship network. This includes other parents and their children who all reside and socialise in the district of Chorlton and have been able to secure tickets in the same block of the stand.

The move to the new stadium also brought with it state of the art technological ticketing developments with the introduction of smart card 'tickets', known as 'proximity cards'. These cards are 'credited' with matches that have been paid for and entry to the stadium is obtained by the use of technology which allows passing the card in front of a sensor to release the turnstiles. Inevitably there were teething problems and large queues built up at the ticket office before the first few games as smart cards failed which prompted considerable dissatisfaction from some fans.

The club, who recognised these problems, responded by having stewards at gates to help process cards which were not functioning properly and stated that they had 'gone down well overall' (IH Interview, 2004). By the time of the match against Arsenal, ticket staff were working outside of the office, in and around the turnstiles and apparently clearing up problems much more effectively with mobile technical

equipment. Bizarrely they were dressed in fluorescent jackets with 'We *are* really here – to help' written on the back, borrowing from and inverting the fans' own vocal creations.

However, some dissatisfaction continues in relation to the new ticketing scheme for cup matches, for which tickets for some have to be credited in person unless the full package of cup matches is bought in advance. As some fans have to make a visit to the stadium to get the cards credited this has been identified by some fans as one of the reasons for the relatively poor attendances at City's cup matches during their first season. The club has also said that part of the problem was initially getting enough match cards - through which non-members can purchase remaining tickets - into the 'market place', something they told us would be less of a problem in the following season.

Others, including some City fans, have suggested that poor attendances at cup games have occurred because the increased capacity has allowed '13,000 [new] fans... who are nearly all women, "cling-on's"... and numpties,' to attend matches, and that at non-Premier-League matches 'there would be closer to 30,000 there... and we all know which kind folk would be missing!' ('CitizenFrank', [Blueview](#), October 24 2003)

This reflects a wider unease among some long standing fans about the increased numbers of City fans attending the new stadium, their status as 'real' City fans and the effect they have had on 'atmosphere', which we discuss below. However, it also suggests that for some fans there are limits to who is, and who is not, part of the City fan communities, re-emphasising the *exclusive* as well as *inclusive* conceptualisations of fan (and other) 'communities'.

The 'proximity cards' also represent an attempt by the club to realise some of the commercial potential of the new stadium, which extends beyond the ability to increase capacity and numbers of season ticket holders and to satisfy demand by selling tickets to those previously on the waiting list. The club's marketing director told us that the 'access control system' has meant that 'we are able to keep tabs... much better on ticket sales in that we are capturing names and addresses for everybody who comes into that stadium and when.' (IH Interview, March 2004). The system also has the *potential* in the future to use the cards to:

- track 'customer buying habits', including merchandise, food and beer
- track what time fans enter the stadium
- load with 'currency' or credit for purchasing inside the ground and shop
- reward fans with bonus points as with many supermarkets and large stores
- reward fans with 'loyalty points' for purchasing items, giving them advantages in securing some away match tickets.

This represents a further 'commodification' of the match-day experience and, whilst it reflects broader developments in English football in which more corporate social relations between company and customer have replaced older, associational relations between club and fans, it is a step few other clubs have so far made. Some fans have criticised the potential to use purchasing as a basis for loyalty points - which have previously only been given on the basis of the number of matches attended or applied for - yet for others it has been welcomed as a sign that 'the club is getting its act

together at last' (MCFC Supporter, Interview, 2004). This re-emphasises the coexistence of 'old' and 'new' within the club.

Tickets and the Local Community

As our mapping of Manchester City's supporters illustrates, there are relatively few Season Ticket holders (109) and less members (81) in the ward in which the City of Manchester stadium is situated. This in part reflects the fact that most supporters and especially season ticket holders come from relatively better-off areas of the city, as well as emphasising the differences in geographical backgrounds of 'neighbourhood' and 'supporter' communities.

Manchester City's community department has told us that they distribute at least 50 free tickets for every game, and sometimes considerably more than this. The numbers of tickets available depends upon the profile of the match and the take-up of tickets by the club's supporters. Sometimes tickets are distributed to those who have written in and requested them, whilst others are given to what are considered to be 'worthy' organisations. In the first season at the CoMS these have included:

- The Refugee Action Team.
- Positive Futures.
- New Deal for Communities.
- Hideaway Youth Project.
- Youth Contact Team
- Abbey Hey Youth Association.

An employee in the community department told us:

We also have an agreement with some groups such as the Feel Good Factor to supply a number of tickets throughout the season in exchange for a donation to the scheme. As well as these groups we also try and help local football teams, schools and City Ladies with tickets when ever possible. (Email correspondence, August 2004)

The Manager of Social Responsibility said:

you can argue that some people locally can't afford [tickets], but then we have 1,000 seats [presumably per season] that from a community perspective we use with schools and other groups to give away, and to an extent that's how we need to engage with people. We also have some seats that go out to schools and schools that get involved with particular projects can reward a class in school by bringing a class to a game and stuff like that, so probably more outreach is going on than in most clubs. But you know... it's always got to be balanced against the fact that you know it costs a lot of money to run a stadium and you know, we can't keep giving too many tickets away otherwise we won't be here in a year's time, we'll be doing a Leeds... It's got to be balanced. (PB Interview 2004)

Here again we can see the commercial limits to which the club feels it can go in terms of community access to the stadium, even for the wider Manchester area. However, it is also clear that there is only a limited attempt to *specifically* market the sale of

tickets, or provide more easily accessible tickets (for instance through bespoke payment schemes), to organisations and residents in East Manchester itself (although a *general* payment scheme exists for season tickets).

Furthermore, although some local organisations have benefited from the *general* distribution of the limited number of free tickets, there does not appear to be a strategy for the supply of free tickets to community organisations in East Manchester *specifically* and we were told that there was ‘no brief’ to target East Manchester residents or community organisations in this way. As such there is little specific attempt to bridge the ‘gap’ between fans’ communities and local neighbourhood communities.

The NDC and EMSAZ did receive 300 tickets for the FA-organised match between Japan and Iceland at the CoMS, referred to above. This exercise proved to be a resounding success: EMSAZ notified a network of local sports organisations of the ticket availability; they then had to sign a statement about the use of the tickets (e.g. no selling on); and local people who received them were asked to take pictures with free disposable cameras and make some statements about the experience.

EMSAZ compiled a short report of the event, which was very well received by those who attended even though the stadium was largely empty, with an overall attendance of around 3,000. Entitled, ‘Iceland V Japan: A big thank you from the community of East Manchester’, the report says that:

We successfully distributed all tickets to local residents & tenants groups, youth projects, local schools and junior football clubs. The tickets were so popular that we could have used about three thousand! (EMSAZ/NDC 2004: 2)

However, more tellingly it also states that ‘as you are aware, although many of the local residents live next to the stadium many of them have never been to a Manchester City F.C. match never mind a full England International event before’ (*ibid*). This is despite the fact that John Dwan of EMSAZ reported an increasing interest in football in the area, as evidenced by the increasing numbers of local football clubs forming in an area which had previously seen relatively low participation.

Perhaps most significant were some of the comments from local people about their experience of the day:

- We have never been to match at the City of Manchester stadium before and this was such an exciting day for my daughter and me. For a lot of the year I have to put up with hordes of fans walking up and down my street.. Thanks. (Local resident)

- Without the support from John and the New Deal team these youngsters would otherwise not get to see live International football matches and as you can see from the photos a great day was had by all. (Maxine Bell, AFC Clayton)

- I liked it so much I will save my spends so I can go again. (Raymond, Local resident) (EMSAZ 2004: 6)

These clearly suggest a normal situation in which there is a degree of separation between the local community and the events which take place in the stadium, and an inability amongst local people to attend events. They also convey the pleasure and sense of inclusion derived from the day.

Partly as a result of the success of this day, MCFC responded by undertaking a similar exercise when they played Lazio in a pre-season friendly in August 2004. Although at short notice, another 100 free tickets were distributed to local people through the NDC and EMSAZ.

Whilst it must be recognised that such exercises are never going to overcome the social and economic problems of the area, nor fully address issues such as skills levels, education deficits, unemployment or crime, the value in terms of good will, as well as creating a sense of community belonging and 'ownership' of the stadium, should not be underestimated. They can go some way to offsetting negative feelings about the effects and nuisance of living 'next door' to the stadium, and create undoubted goodwill for those that run the stadium.

From the club's perspective, a more targeted approach to supplying tickets to the local area specifically, must also have a certain marketing value as the last of the cited quotes illustrates. A strategy which combined the distribution of some free tickets; the marketing of available match-by-match tickets, where available (e.g. cup matches which have been significantly undersubscribed in the 2003/04 season); the development of links with local football clubs and more proactive work with local supporter groups; and either subsidy or incentive payment mechanisms for local people (in conjunction with local agencies) might help to bring about a closer relationship between club and locality, as well as between residential and supporter communities.

Atmosphere and communality

The sense of topophilia or love of place associated with football grounds is not something which is inevitable. It does not emerge out of nothing and is not given merely as a consequence of the location of a football club. Rather it is something which grows in the manner of a successful marriage on the back of survival in the face of adversity, moments of tragedy, joy, despair and journeys travelled together. As such the expression of fans' love and commitment to a club, in the form of what is known in football vernacular as 'atmosphere', is profoundly influenced by their relationship with the stadiums that play host to the communions of fans with their team.

The development of City fans' relationship with the new stadium has not been an easy or straightforward one. Most fans to whom we spoke and read opinions of have indicated their dissatisfaction with the lack of atmosphere at the new ground. As the following quotes from internet discussions illustrate, fans have blamed the poor atmosphere on either the introduction of 'new' and 'out of town' fans as the capacity increased, or of 'middle class' fans, or of the 'failures' as they see it in replicating the configurations of Maine Road. The poor performances of the team have also been cited as a reason:

‘- I think it’s about time we turned this ground into the new maine road. If someone’s not signing next to you tonight then smack ‘em in the mouth and send ‘em home. You owe it to your club! (‘Fowlup’)

- ...Seating arrangement has to be changed back to something approaching the way it was at MR (‘Wheelie’)
- two people to my right never even stand when we have scored mind you they are from Chesterfield (‘Lance corpra’)
- thing was as well they go before the end of the game - missed the equaliser against zzzzpool [Liverpool] - just can’t imagine watching City and not staying to the final second. wonder where they were when Dickov scored - Chesterfield I expect’ (‘Blueeal’)
- just what i’m on about...things have gone drastically wrong. We should have a section set aside for: “new fans that aren’t that bothered”. Can I suggest Old Trafford! (‘Fowlup’)’ (The Pride of Manchester, 7 January 2004)

Some activities of fans, which might to some actually suggest new forms of (familial) communality developing, have been criticised by others wanting a more raw experience:

‘Some of the tales heard and things witnessed first hand are shocking. People “picnicking” on the seats outside the turnstiles....’ (Blueview, 24 October 2003)

One fan presented the following ‘pros’ and ‘cons’ to the old Maine Road and new stadium:

Maine Road

Their in half an hour
Good atmosphere
Easy to get too
Great seat
Able to get a drink at half time
Home in half an hour
Good value season ticket

CoMS

No atmosphere
What has happened to our songs? (We’re not really here -Sh#te), (Blue moon - bored to death with this chant)
Takes 1.5 hours to get to and from
Expensive seat which is not as good as Maine Road
NO chance of a drink at half time
Smokiest place on earth at half time
Have to walk quarter of a mile the other way after game (police blockade)
Man city are now super corporate - treat fans like idiot cash cow

(Blueview 21 December 2003)

This contrasts to the almost universal approval for the new stadium before the season began, as well as to other more positive comments about the ground we have received and read:

‘the ground’s great, even if the atmosphere isn’t’ (PG Interview, 2003)

‘I don’t believe there are any “new fans”, well not in any great numbers anyway. I bet most people going every week are people who went to Maine Rd whenever they could get in. And the majority of the crowd is made up of ‘old fans’ anyway. There is no excuse for the lack of atmosphere other than the seating arrangements... Don’t forget, Main Stand, Platt Lane & Kippax upper

tier never (well hardly ever) sang at Maine Rd. ('FourEyes', 7.1.2004 The Pride of Manchester)

It also reflects a broader concern among many long standing football fans about the changing nature of consumption at football, in which visceral and liminal experiences are being replaced by a more sedate (and seated) audience; as well as similar complaints from fans at other new grounds.

This suggests a problem for clubs wishing to develop commercially as well as satisfy the differing interests and concerns of different groups, or 'types' of fans (see Giulianotti 2002). One club official told us that he believed the club needed to address the type of music being played before the match - 'It's just a case of "we've moved to a new stadium, we want something g new and different" and... I think we've just tried to be too clever'. (Interview February 2004)

There have been active attempts to overcome this dissatisfaction with the placement of banners and flags around the ground. Some of these have retained an affection for former homes ('*Remember the past, embrace the future, Maine Road - Blue Camp*') whilst others, such as one displayed on 'derby day', stake authenticity claims on the basis of locality ('*Welcome to Manchester*'). This reflects the ongoing conflict over belonging to the city referred to above and was countered in the away supporters section with a red, white and black (United's colours) flag with '*Beswick*' (the locale in which the City of Manchester stadium is situated) emblazoned across it, put there by a United fan from the area. Later another United flag went alongside it reading '*100% manc*'.

Whilst the location of some of these banners over the corporate 'dressing' of the stadium has led to their removal and associated conflicts, one fan group has worked more closely with the club which operates under the names Blue Order and the Atmosphere Action Group. They have been involved in a more orchestrated attempt to address the perceived lack of atmosphere and have been partially successful in securing a block of seats together where those interested in being more vociferous in their support of the team can gather. This group has also collected funds to produce two large flags reading '*We dream of playing in the shirt. Today God chose you. Play like we dream*' which are sanctioned by the club and hang off the 'Kippax' stand on match days.

Another group, the Centenary Supporters Association - an independent group of supporters clubs who broke away from the official supporters club in the mid-1990s - also held discussions with the club about having a 'fans banner' at the stadium. After discussing a number of options, the club agreed that a suggestion by one of the CSA's officials - '*MCFC - The Mancunian Way*' - should go ahead. However, somewhat to the disappointment of those fans, the club 'liked the idea so much' that they produced it themselves as an official hoarding board in line with other livery in the stadium. Whilst this may have been a perfectly well-meaning adoption of fans' wishes on the part of the club, it failed to convey to many fans that this was a supporter initiative or banner, another example perhaps of the more corporate approach.

It seems that the AAG's/Blue Order's activities do not meet with universal approval and there is conflict over the basis for the lack of atmosphere in the new stadium. One

of the organisers of Chorlton Blues is vehemently opposed to the A.A.G. and expressed his misgivings along with other supporters' representatives at a meeting of the Manchester City Fans' Committee. Opposing the instrumentality of the group's activities, G sees singing ends as a 'naff' idea: 'Singing end. Do me a favour. Like they have up at Old Trafford!' He recalled that at one game his mate had been in the middle of the 'singing area' but didn't notice and in fact had to ask where the singing area had been. Part of the hostility relates to suspicions about those involved who, for G, are not regarded as having any credibility amongst mainstream City fans as they are not 'known' and don't appear to have a history of activism.

Others have a very different interpretation of who are involved in these groups. The Blue Order group - who had organised a CD of City songs to raise funds for the banner and also suggested, somewhat bizarrely, that they would distribute 'duck whistles' to create noise in the stadium (www.coolasduck.com) - was referred to by one fan contact, BH, as 'our lads'. These were fans, he said who, far from being 'not known', attended both home and away matches and were part of a hard core group more likely to engage in fan violence. This re-emphasises the divided nature of fan communities, the impossibility of 'knowing' all from within the fan communities and the problems in identifying one dominant fan view.

G also takes a different view towards the reasons for the lack of atmosphere articulating that 'it's quite simple, the atmosphere has been poor 'cos since we've been there we've only won 2 games. They just need to start playing well and winning games then the atmosphere will get going'.

To some extent this view was born out on the day G made these comments, when City played Manchester United for the first time at the new stadium, beating them 4-1, which went somewhat towards generating the first real expressions of affection for the stadium. Although the atmosphere at the game actually ebbed and flowed by the end of the match it was as exuberant as at any City match and from our perspective what was important were the City manager Kevin Keegan's comment afterwards that 'It's more special than our win against them at Maine Road last season because we needed to lay the ghost of this stadium... We've lifted that curse today. We can definitely call it home now, and our fans wouldn't have wanted it to be lifted against anybody else.'

The manner in which such moments contribute to the formation of a sense of topophilia, togetherness and belonging was illustrated in the more animated fashion in which neighbouring fans who previously ignored each other now embraced and chatted. Equally at the final whistle the less geographically intense illustrations of community were in evidence as mobile phones appeared ubiquitous, extending across and beyond the stadium, sharing experiences, spreading news and teasing rival supporters.

The fan community is a multi-dimensional community where connections are sought out through attachment to the club and communicated through increasingly diverse technological resources. For Delanty, individuals are not placed in communities by social forces, but they situate themselves in community as we are always actively engaged in the search for new forms of solidarity and ways of belonging and togetherness (viz. Maffesoli, 1996).

The next season brings with it new opportunities for those individuals to situate themselves in the communities of their choice as fans have been given the chance to re-locate once more with the hope that those fans who wish to express their support more vocally will gather together in greater numbers. However, complaints about the stadium, its 'new fans', atmosphere as well as nostalgia for Maine Road persist among some groups of fans.

6. Conclusions and Emerging Issues

In this report we have explored a large range of issues associated with the movement of a football club from one part of a city to another. We have paid particular attention to the effect of this move on the different resident, business and fan communities most affected by that move. We have explored these issues in some depth through a case study which has some unique features and through a process in which sport, and football in particular, has become central to a strategy for the physical, economic and social regeneration of a city. However, whilst this case study is 'special' in some respects, we believe that it has produced lessons which can be applied more generally to football clubs' relations with their different 'communities'; as well as to the broadening agenda in which football clubs and the development of their grounds are increasingly part of regeneration processes. Here, we briefly raise some questions regarding the roles, responsibilities and relationships of clubs to their communities.

6.1 Clubs and Regeneration

In all 3 of our case studies, the football clubs are involved through stadium developments in agendas linked to urban regeneration. Although this case study has some unique elements, there is a broader question about how clubs deal with these new sets of obligations and responsibilities, and the central roles which they can play in relation to business, resident and fan communities.

In this particular case, we would like to highlight the following:

The Community Use Plan is an innovative strategy in which a football facility becomes a significant part of a local regeneration strategy and in which a major new sports facility can be made accessible and useful to local people. Whilst we recognise the positive ways in which this has been received and the access to facilities that has been provided, a number of concerns have been expressed to us. Not least of these is the question over the use of the pitch and/or an alternative pitch; and the instrumental relationship by which the process of community use operates, exemplified by the issue of the associated cost of catering for using the facility for community groups. We understand that all partners are working to resolve these specific issues which we will explore further in ongoing research. But we will also be investigating ways in which clubs can develop more organic and less institutionalised relationships.

The New Community Strategy is one way in which the club have responded to the opportunities provided by the stadium move and the new context in which they are operating. We will be exploring further the development of this strategy and in particular the targeting of specific 'communities of disadvantage', geographical areas and social problems; and the extent to which the club can work effectively with those agencies already skilled and working in these areas. This will be a central, defining area in our ongoing work.

Public Debate/Community Involvement: whilst there has clearly been a considerable effort made to give information to local communities and involve them in the processes outlined in this report, questions remain for us about the extent to which the broader 'communities' that we have considered have been involved, the role and

representativeness of community or resident leaders, and the nature of public debate and disclosure of information about these processes.

6.2 Clubs and Neighbourhoods

We have also noted that there are both negative and positive implications for local neighbourhoods and communities of both having a new stadium and of losing a stadium in their area.

We have noted in our study of the former neighbourhood communities of the club the extent to which an historical legacy of negative perceptions can cause problems; as well as the ways in which involvement in consultation and decision making can overcome these. This seems to us to have significant lessons for new facility building for any football club, and especially those which are within contexts of social and economic regeneration. We have suggested that such developments should entail:

- An active and *meaningful* involvement in decision making by local community representatives and other residents and businesses, facilitated by the football club and local authorities
- Developments designed with local communities to meet their needs, as well as those of other parties such as the club
- Regular and accurate information sharing about developments, plans and options
- Independent monitoring of community involvement in the developments

We have also noted the extensive efforts made to ameliorate the worst effects of ‘nuisance’ caused by football crowds and stadia on the locality and the overall positive results of these in this particular case study, especially regarding the issue of transport.

Where stadia are also used for other purposes and by different fan communities (e.g. for international sports events and concerts) there seems to be greater efforts needed because of the unfamiliarity with, and lack of connection between, ‘communities’ generated by these events and the host area. This could include greater levels of information supplied, for example at the point of sale or supply of tickets, on matters such as local travel, local licensing restrictions, maps and information about the local area (which can also be used to publicise the ongoing improvements in the area).

6.3 Clubs and Businesses

Our surveys of both the old and new locations of the football club suggest that there are negative and positive impacts of having a football club situated in a locality. From our, admittedly limited, visual survey of business premises at the old and new locations, we have found that in both areas some businesses have prospered whilst others have suffered as a consequence of either gaining or losing a stadium. It has been interesting and somewhat ironic to note that the building of a stadium in one area and the demolition of a stadium in another are both being used to lead regeneration projects.

With regard to small local businesses at the new location, whilst recognising efforts already made, we feel that there are greater opportunities, in conjunction with other

local partners, for clubs to encourage business activity between themselves and some suppliers. The more 'corporate' development of the club (and some may say the football industry as whole) has, in some ways, made this more problematic.

With regard to the employment of local people, we wonder whether more concerted efforts between agencies and clubs are needed to improve both the levels and the nature of local employment at clubs, something we will be exploring further in the ongoing research.

6.4 Clubs and Fans

We have noted the complementary senses of loss and gain felt by supporters in moving from a much loved old location to a much better equipped new location, as well as the attempts made by the club to both mark the passing of the old and smooth the journey to the new. Of particular interest to us has been the attempt, in an otherwise more 'corporate' context, to replicate the locations of micro fan communities from one stadium to another.

Although there have been some inevitable practical teething problems with the move for fans, the club has also attempted to respond to these concerns. However, we also have to highlight the at times virulently negative feelings some fans have with regard to the experience of the new stadium and the new formations of communality and 'atmosphere' there. In many ways this relates to the increasing corporate style of the club, as evidenced by the 'stage managing' of the end of the former ground and the more commodified match-day experience at the new ground, despite good overall levels of approval for the move. As with issues associated with the club's other communities, fan communities perhaps need greater levels of involvement in decision making and more opportunities in which their creativity can flourish.

We have noted that increased opportunities for the club's fans to attend games (because of increased capacity at the new ground) has not resulted in dramatic changes to the geographical or socio-economic profile of the fan base. Increases in the fan base have tended to strengthen previously strong areas, which as we reported last time tend to be suffering from low levels of multiple deprivation. This evidence re-emphasises our previous findings that those who most regularly attend football matches in all three case studies come from less deprived, more wealthy and healthy areas, something which clubs and authorities might need to address if football is to play a full part in strategies for social cohesion.

6.5 Multiple Communities

Our study of this particular stadium move also has wider lessons concerning conceptualisations of community which clubs develop. In this and our previous report we have tried to highlight the very different concerns of various groups of people, and the constantly changing formations of community with which the club has to deal. This suggests that clubs cannot have any one, or a singular, notion of what their community is, and must have different ways of thinking about themselves as important parts of a number of different community formations. This perhaps suggests

a more holistic and pluralist approach to the different, contingent and changing formations of community that relate to the football club.

6.6 Fans and Local Communities

One example of this is the distinctions between fan communities and neighbourhood communities which exist. It is clear from our mapping and qualitative findings that most fan communities are not also neighbourhood communities, and that overlaps are small. Thus, despite evidence of 'goodwill', for example from fans to their new neighbours, or appreciation of the sense of importance or even 'carnival' which fans can bring to stadium communities, there is still a sense of separation and distinction between the two: something which is often *reinforced* by institutional attempts to bring them together. If these distinctions were more effectively bridged - and we have paid some attention to the role which attendance at the stadium can play in this - the club may be able to become more embedded within its neighbourhood and other communities. Thus, even something relatively simple like the (free, subsidised or specific) supply or marketing of tickets to local people can help to create a sense of inclusion, reduce local antagonism, and generate goodwill (as well as 'market' the club to new audiences). However, on the converse of this, the recognition of fan communities and the involvement of them in club-based 'community' activities in neighbourhood areas is also an important development which requires further consideration.

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