

substance

**On the Eastside:  
Research Report into the Estate Based  
Social Inclusion Interventions of Leyton  
Orient Community Sports Programme**



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## Foreword

Over fifteen years ago, at the tail end of the last Conservative Government's time in office, I began working with Leyton Orient Community Sports Programme (LOCSP) on the design and evaluation of a Drug Challenge Fund supported project. At its heart was the idea that we could support people's cessation of substance misuse through the building of a mutual support network and the personal and collective responsibilities that surround participation in a sporting community.

It seemed a simple enough idea that resonated with those who had positive experiences of sport and the moral and physical framework it can provide. The problem was that those we wanted to work with often hadn't had positive experiences of sport and were generally not involved in any form of organized sport at all! So the project quickly rejected conventional models of sport development in favour of bottom up, incremental community development approaches based on the relationships between project workers and a growing band of enthusiastic participants<sup>1</sup>.

From these green shoots of what we would now recognize as a form of domestic 'sport for development', LOCSP emerged as a pioneer leading the way for a series of similar initiatives, some funded, some not, some successful, others less so. In the face of this interest in their work the managers of the programme were acutely conscious that they were 'doing things differently', often in the face of resistance, and, at times, that they were making it up as they went along. It was that awareness that inspired them to attempt to document the process, warts and all, in the hope that others might benefit from more guidance and help inspire a more general shift in practice.

Over the years, many of those who benefited from the work became leaders in their own communities, whether through their support of team-mates, engagement of other participants, voluntary involvement in the organisation of training, activities and events or by becoming project workers themselves. Existing workers grew into the new ways of working or moved on, others arrived with more fresh ideas and LOCSP itself had to adapt as an organisation, breaking away from the professional football club and local authority that had spawned it and becoming a 'long trousers organisation'.

These changes, which in many ways pre-figured but also exemplified the language of Big Society articulated by the new coalition Government, were captured in all their gory detail in the original report, *On the Eastside*, which emerged from two years of research embedded at the heart of the organisation. Whilst it was never formally published, it was still sought out, with its uncompromising, novel narrative style of presentation attracting an engaged following. Some were inspired to replicate and build on the LOCSP approach; we were encouraged to form the research cooperative Substance to develop and share the learning; whilst LOCSP itself was able to better understand and reflect on its own work in the years that followed.

Our sense is that with a wider contemporary focus on the role that voluntary and community organisations can play in addressing social concerns and uncertainty around the impact of new policy directions, there may be a wider audience for the report's key messages than when it was first written in 2004. So we have decided to publish it with only minor amendments relating to the lack of contemporary relevance of the policy environment at the time and with the addition of this short foreword and a postscript from LOCSP's current Director Neil Taylor. We hope you take as much from it as he and the rest of the cast of characters took from the process of creating it some years ago.

**Professor Tim Crabbe**  
**Chair, Substance**

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<sup>1</sup> See Crabbe, T. (2000) 'A Sporting Chance?: using sport to tackle drug use and crime, *Drugs: education, prevention and policy*, 7(4): 381-91; Crabbe, T. (1998) 'Going for Goals': An evaluation of the Tower Hamlets Drug Challenge Fund Project. London: Leyton Orient Community Sports Programme

## Section 1. Introduction: Why study LOCSP?

### 'Getting to know you': A visit from the Anglo-Irish Council

*One of the lesser-known consequences of the Good Friday Agreement which sought to bring peaceful accord to the north of Ireland was an arrangement for the Irish and British to share good policy practice. As a direct spin-off from this arrangement it was agreed that various representatives from Irish anti-drug agencies as well as community sports workers should come to England to look at innovative sporting intervention projects, which aimed to reduce drug abuse by young people through the provision of sporting opportunities. As well as the Irish representatives, delegates from the Channel Islands were invited to attend. The Anglo-Irish Council, a body set up specifically by the Agreement to facilitate the dissemination of good practice, funded the visit. Positive Futures, under the directorship of the newly appointed Neil Watson, hosted the three-day event, which was based at a smart hotel in Victoria where the delegates were staying. A conference room was set aside for presentations and discussions. Around the side of the main room display boards flashed slick posters promoting the work of Positive Futures. A table carried promotional literature from other agencies concerned with this kind of work; Positive Futures, Sport England, Crime Concern, NACRO, the Football Foundation.*

*The first day was given over to the visiting delegates. A series of presentations detailed the issues and problems particular to their own jurisdictions. All in all the day gave one the impression that sporting interventions were not on the agenda in terms of the visitors approach to tackling the scourge of drugs.*

*Day two was an opportunity for the English to discuss various approaches, which had attempted to use sport as a diversion from drug abuse, anti-social behaviour, criminality, and social exclusion more generally. A government minister welcomed the foreign contingent before being driven off to his next appointment. Gary Stannett from the Kick Start project in South London talked about his work with marginalised youth, the problems of funding, the difficulties of operating in a politically correct polity which eschewed the very thought of supporting a boxing project (which might be seen as too macho, violent, uncivilised and tainted by an association with working class 'bovver'). A selection of Positive Futures project managers recounted the problems and the successes that they had experienced. The audience asked questions of their speakers and expressed excitement and optimism at the prospect of implementing similar initiatives in their own country.*

*After lunch, all silver platters, goujons and smartly presented finger food, the party was dispatched on a bus to see some projects in practice. In stark contrast to the glitz of the hotel the bus trundled through the run-down streets of London's east end to Brisbane Road, where LOCSP has its home. The organisation's Chair of Trustees, Fatima Koumbarji, the new Director Grant Cornwell and the Strategy Development Officer 'Adam' talked for half an hour about the development of the organisation, its ethos and the pragmatism associated with its growth in the context of a particular political and funding environment. After that the guests boarded the bus again and drove to the Beaumont Estate. Plans to regenerate the area involved the virtual demolition of the existing housing stock.*

*We pulled up by the 'cage' - a small five-aside pitch - that provides the only sporting facility for the kids on the estate. 'Kyle' had organised a turn up and play tournament that was well attended with around ten teams organised into a competitive format. Beyond the players the tournament had attracted a fair crowd of local youth. Teenagers sat astride mountain bikes with hoods pulled up shouting encouragement and profanities in equal measure,*

*'Come on man, kill him. You pussy'.*

*Our arrival caused no small interest. A busload of suits is a not often seen spectacle in this neighbourhood.*

*'Who are you? What are all these guys doing? What do you want?'*

*One of the LOCSP staff puts his head in his hands, groans and jokes,*

*'They're all going to lose their wallets aren't they?'*

*We mingle in with the spectators, faces up against the mesh, surrounded by the grey and grim tower*



*blocks condemned for their criminogenic tendencies. A senior civil servant stands alongside us. At the time she was Neil Watson's immediate superior in the Drugs Directorate of the Home Office. New to the job herself she was concerned about outcomes. She is concerned to assess the likelihood of evidencing that this kind of work really has any impact on drug abuse.*

*'Are these the kind of kids who would have taken drugs anyway? How do we prove it? How do we really know whether they have stopped?'*

*The Irish contingent have 'the craic' with the inquisitive youngsters begging them questions. When the tournament comes to an end four or five of them stroll onto the pitch and start having a kick-around with some of the players.*

*We board the bus again and move on to Low Hall playing fields. Situated in a desolate part of Walthamstow, next to the civic dump, these playing fields represent the home ground for the Eastside team. 'Sol' and Grant watch from the sidelines as the team play out a comfortable 3-0 victory over opponents from the Thursday afternoon London works league. 'Sol' and Grant chat comfortably with their counterparts from Ireland. 'Sol' gives his telephone number to various interested parties who plan to call at a later date to pick his brains about developing something similar. Eventually the party piles back on the coach to be driven back to central London and the big dinner being held in the hotel that night.*

*Attendance at the following morning's session was patchy. Every so often a delegate would arrive late and ask a friend if they made it past that pub in Soho.*

*The final session was dedicated to telling people how to do all of this properly. Someone talked about the work of the Football Foundation, the head of research and evaluation from Sport England showed people how to quantify success. A representative from MORI, who had recently won the tender to evaluate Positive Futures, gave a very slick power-point assisted presentation which argued that an organisation such as theirs was perfectly equipped to convince funders and potential funders that you were indeed 'successful'.*

*More than a year after the visit nobody from the delegation had called 'Sol'.*

During its first seven years of operation LOCSP received many visitors. Politicians, journalists, researchers and practitioners ventured out onto the housing estates, playing fields and schools of East London to witness the work of the charity that was formed in 1997. They have consistently expressed their admiration, returning with a sense of respect and desire to see more of the same, an expansion of the programme's work, its extension into new social and geographic areas and dispersal of the 'model' to other organisations. This confidence in LOCSP's work has indeed contributed to the emergence of new funding streams and the propagation of the organisation's work as a model of best practice, which now reaches out beyond British shores to other parts of Europe and indeed the Middle East. However, until now this response has been driven largely by a mixture of intuition, ignorance and excitement in the face of innovation rather than a substantive understanding of what it is that makes the LOCSP approach 'work'.

This is not surprising. For it is often harder to convey what works than what doesn't. We often have an intuitive sense of when things are going well, as with a football team's performances on the pitch, which is not easily recorded and which in the moment of its realisation is more readily enjoyed for what it is than how it might be reproduced. But just as with the successful football team, good form and popularity are rarely long lasting and indeed are often found to be susceptible to close examination, since it is through such examination that others can learn, develop and move beyond.

It was with these thoughts in mind that the research programme presented here was conceived. Since for the organisers and guardians of LOCSP, community sports work and engagement with disadvantaged groups for the purposes of social development was never a matter for popular consumption, navel gazing or point scoring. Rather it has long been recognised as a complex sphere of activity that requires considerable self-awareness, reflection and criticism. A field of work that often relies upon a willingness to take risks in the full knowledge that they will not always pay off but from which valuable lessons can always be learned.

This had been LOCSP's experience from the moment it began to engage in estate based diversionary social interventions in 1995 when the sporadic attendance of the early participants tested the organisation's nerve to keep going at a time when this type of work was less in vogue. Up to that time the organisation was not attempting to reach out to the more marginalised but was focused on those that its staff had the skills and understanding to engage with. After spending several years learning the language and business of the social inclusion agenda, and in the aftermath of the publication of the PAT 10 report on the role of sport and the arts in tackling social exclusion<sup>2</sup>, LOCSP had the confidence to commission this study with a view to better understanding the context of its work and to inform similar organisations interested in developing their own interventions.

This desire was also informed by a dissatisfaction with the lack of status accorded to 'community' work both within Leyton Orient Football Club and the wider world of football and sport, which painted a picture of the organisation's staff as social workers in tracksuits rather than skilled community sports coaches. The role of researchers in highlighting these distinctions and the particularity of estate based sports delivery<sup>3</sup> had also had its part to play in securing the confidence of staff to carry on and funders to provide backing, whilst helping to inform the strategic thinking of the organisation through this often difficult phase of development.

It is in this context that LOCSP has also sought to evaluate its work with young people on the estates of East London in ways that move beyond the conventional 'spot checks' and exercises in number crunching that have traditionally justified sports development programmes. The motivation for commissioning this study emerged from a quite different imperative to reveal the processes and practices through which programmes come into being, participants are engaged and results are achieved. The research then, was based on a long term evaluative approach that we reflect upon in more detail later and which saw the researchers develop an intimate relationship and engagement with the organisation and those that it comes into contact with. Through this intimacy it does not seek merely to describe the what of community sports practice but rather to articulate the how. Through this work we hope to have revealed something of the complexity and difficulties of using sport to engage with the social exclusion agenda whilst also highlighting some practical measures for achieving the best results and avoiding the deepest pitfalls.

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<sup>2</sup> DCMS (1999) Policy Action Team 10: Report to the Social Exclusion Unit -Arts and Sport, London: HMSO

<sup>3</sup> Crabbe, T. (1998) 'Going for Goals': An evaluation of the Tower Hamlets Drug Challenge Fund Project. London: Leyton Orient Community Sports Programme

In seeking to meet this challenge we have necessarily adopted a particular style, which may not be entirely familiar to the audience for evaluation reports. We have sought not merely to present ‘findings’ and conclusions but rather to invite the reader to get to know something of the ‘feel’, the ‘smell’ and the ‘taste’ of this kind of work. At the same time we are conscious of the need to develop a new conceptual vocabulary for the discussion of these kinds of intervention. As such, after outlining the context for our work, we present the substantive elements of our research by attempting to weave our analysis and theorisations alongside what we hope are compelling narratives intended to bring the activities we have engaged with vividly to life. The audience for this report will best judge our success. These passages - or ethnographic interludes - have been separated from the more reflective discussion, theoretical consideration and conclusions through the use of an alternative font and indentation of the text.

### Key issues

Since its foundation in 1997, politicians, journalists, researchers and practitioners have ventured onto the housing estates, playing fields and schools of East London to witness the work of LOCSP. It is this consistent level of interest that underpinned the desire to document, understand and share LOCSPs experiences with a wider audience.

### The emergence of football in the community schemes

LOCSP’s work did not emerge in isolation or without a back story. In 1978 with £1 million of Government funding, the then Sports Council helped to launch thirty nine ‘Football and the Community’ schemes across the country: twenty nine at professional football clubs and ten at professional rugby league clubs. The concerns that formed the background to this development were threefold:

- The lack of leisure facilities that existed in many urban areas;
- Issues associated with football hooliganism;
- Falling attendances at football matches.

In 1981 Roger Ingham produced an evaluation of the Football in the Community schemes on behalf of the Sports Council in which he made a call for increased funding and an expansion of the initiative. Despite this move, most disappeared after the Sports Council ceased to fund them whilst others slipped into disarray<sup>4</sup>.

In August 1985, Michael Burns of the Footballers’ Further Education and Vocational Training Society (FFE&VTS), the educational branch of the Professional Footballers’ Association (PFA), met with the Sports Council to discuss possible new initiatives. In the wake of the Heysel stadium disaster that saw thirty nine Juventus fans die in disturbances with Liverpool supporters before the 1985 European Cup Final in Brussels, FFE&VTS proposed a new scheme entitled ‘Football in the Community’ (FiTC) which they wished to launch with the financial help of the Manpower Services Commission. Approval for the scheme was granted in January 1986 when the FiTC pilot scheme was launched in the North West of England with the following aims:

- To provide employment and training for unemployed people;
- To promote closer links between professional football clubs and the community;
- To involve minority and ethnic groups in social and recreational activities;
- To attempt to prevent acts of hooliganism and vandalism;
- To maximise the use of facilities at football clubs<sup>5</sup>.

The main focus of the FiTC schemes was young people and much like their predecessors, FiTC schemes were cast in the social and political context of providing recreation for the ‘socially disadvantaged’ and preventing young people from becoming involved in hooliganism or other ‘anti-social’ behaviour.

FFE&VTS, the PFA, and other bodies that were involved in their provision largely regarded the original six FiTC schemes as a success. By 1987 a further ten football clubs in the North West of England were invited to set up schemes, whilst in 1988, with the support of a new Regional Office in Barnsley, eleven Yorkshire and Humberside clubs established projects and four were set up in the North East.

<sup>4</sup> Sports Council, (1986) Football: The Club in the Community Workshop Report, London: Sports Council, p.81

<sup>5</sup> PFA (1999) The Footballers’ Further Education and Vocational Training Society, Football in the Community, Manchester: PFA

At the same time as the FFE&VTS FiTC schemes were being established, a number of other, unconnected, football and community programmes emerged in the London area. In the mid-1980s, three London football clubs set up community schemes at the behest of the Greater London Council (GLC) that were designed to bring those clubs closer to their local communities. The clubs involved - Arsenal, Fulham, and Millwall - received funding from the GLC to appoint Community Development Officers with a brief to open up clubs' facilities to local use and to find ways of using clubs for the benefit of the local area. After the abolition of the GLC in 1986, a number of partnerships emerged across London between local authorities, the Sports Council and football clubs that aimed to replicate the successes of the GLC schemes. Examples include the partnership between Brentford Football Club, Ealing and Hounslow Council and the Sports Council; and the partnership between Crystal Palace Football Club, Croydon Council and the Sports Council. In all cases, these partnerships enabled Community Development Officers to be employed at clubs to undertake project-based work with local people.

In the 1990s, the FFE&VTS FiTC programme continued to grow and also began to incorporate a number of the independent London schemes. In 1991, under a new management support framework that included the PFA, the Football League and the Football Association (FA), the FiTC schemes developed a set of aims and objectives that were incorporated into a Business Plan. With increased funding offered for the schemes by the Football Trust and commercial sponsors such as Pizza Hut, Wagon Wheels and Adidas, these aims were refined again in 1996 when it was stated that the schemes should:

- Encourage more people (especially children) to play football;
- Encourage more people (especially children) to watch football;
- Promote closer links between football clubs and the community;
- Encourage more people to support their local club;
- Maximise community facilities and their community usage at football clubs;
- Provide temporary and/or gainful employment and training for unemployed people (where appropriate).  
(PFA, 1999)

These aims and objectives are instructive. As the perception of football as an inclusive and friendly game was re-established in the 1990s, clubs became able once again to sell themselves to their local communities, not as nuisances and harbourers of hooliganism, but rather as positive representations of local values and identities.

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## Sport and social inclusion

Similarly, beyond football, wider sports based interventions have been in place for much of the last quarter of a century. During the 1980s the Action Sport programme pioneered by the newly founded Sports Council was targeted at the young unemployed living in inner city urban areas experiencing a range of social problems.

These schemes, which were later to pass into local authority control, were characterised by a community approach in that they employed 'outreach' methods as a means of contacting their constituency. Later, their remit was extended from a core focus on 'problem' youth to under-participating groups, including the elderly, disabled people and women in general<sup>6</sup>.

More recently, following the re-organisation of the Sports Council into regional bodies, Sport England initiated the 'Active Communities' programme which was designed to increase and sustain sport participation and to promote continuous improvement in sporting opportunities and services at a local level. This initiative continued the former Sports Council's theme of 'sport for all'. 'Active Communities' was financed through Sport England and again looked to develop approaches to sport and recreation with excluded groups with some of its key aims being to

<sup>6</sup> See McDonald, D. & Tungatt, M. (1993) Community development and sport. London: Community Development Foundation; Haywood, L. (ed.) (1994) Community Leisure and Recreation: Theory and Practice. Oxford, Butterworth-Heinemann.

deal with problems such as truancy, anti-social behaviour, racism and crime prevention. The Active Communities scheme focused on 'Sport Action Zones' which were seen as proactive initiatives aiming to create 'effective and sustainable infrastructures' for sport in areas of high economic deprivation.

In recent years the work of LOCSP has been held up as a model of good practice in relation to the agendas raised in this section. In particular the organisation's work with those perceived as being the most socially deprived or 'at risk' has come to be regarded as groundbreaking. This championing of LOCSP's approach coincides then with the more general 're-discovery' of sport's ability to 'do good' and the state's increasing promotion of organisations not traditionally regarded as having a role in social problem solving. The agents of the socially 'included', sponsor the endeavours of community sports agencies such as LOCSP because of their presumed capacity to 'reach' and 'manage' a constituency of the 'excluded' who have proven increasingly troublesome for more traditional interventions. In accordance with Andrew Scull's famous essay, *Community Corrections: Panacea, Progress or Pretence*<sup>7</sup> which sought to account for the fundamental shift in the basis of social control from the 1970s onwards, such agencies are also in tune with the process of decarceration, whereby the focus of control has shifted beyond the walls of those institutions charged with incarcerating problematic sections of the population, namely prisons and mental asylums.

The negative vocabulary newly associated with incarceration contrasts markedly with the (supposedly) new, 'community' based system of social control. Since 'community' is a word bereft of all negative connotations. As Bauman suggests, it is a word that also has a 'feel', a good feel, 'like a fireplace at which we warm our hands on a frosty day'<sup>8</sup>. To talk of community corrections then is to talk more fondly and optimistically of dealing with our social problems, since crucially, 'community' is a word that sells, particularly when presented alongside an association with football.

### Rapping the rhetoric

*The conference organisers had sent out glossy brochures making it clear that for all of those involved in the business of youth crime this was an event that required attendance. A star-studded line-up of all those individuals heading the key agencies charged with the perennial problem of bringing unruly and damaged teenagers to heel, as well as front-line practitioners of those projects regarded as representing best practice, were scheduled to present. More significantly; the Home Secretary, the chairman of the Youth Justice Board, and the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police (then the Rt. Hon. David Blunkett, Lord Faulkner and Sir John Stevens respectively) were to outline in detail for the first time a new programme of legislation, the rationale that lay behind it, and the strategies of enforcement to be implemented, that would constitute a robust, innovative and effective response to anti-social youngsters. The suggestion was that if you were not here you might 'miss the boat', not 'be on board', 'be out of the loop'. The conference was held in the Connaught Rooms in London, the Freemasons equivalent of Wembley Stadium.*

*The glossy brochure promoting the conference talked about the evils of 'social exclusion' and the vision of a more inclusive society based on the principles of meritocracy. Without mitigation seats cost £250, with voluntary sector workers needing only to pay £175...the 'socially excluded' were not expected. Nevertheless the conference room was full. A glimpse at the delegate list revealed that Youth Offending Teams and Youth Inclusion Programmes had provided half the audience. Local authorities were well represented too; policemen, magistrates, youth-workers and members of the voluntary sector less prominent. All in all there were probably in the region of 1500 delegates. The conference organisers were obviously wise to the fact that talking about crime and social exclusion pays (one consequence of registration for this event meaning inclusion on a mailing list which advertises 'must be at' conferences on a near weekly basis).*

*The chair of the morning session apologised to the assembled. The then Home Secretary, David Blunkett, had been held up in traffic. When he arrived he spoke about lives being blighted by crime and anti-social behaviour... He appealed to common sense, as he often does, and proceeded to outline forthcoming legislation that owed its spirit more to the former section of New Labour's mantra on crime than the latter. And then he was gone, rushed from the hall surrounded by a retinue of aides as he moved on to his next appointment. Three-quarters of the media followed suit.*

*The mid-morning coffee break allowed the ambitious to mingle. People eyed delegate badges, which betrayed the bearers name, status, rank and organisation before determining whether chitchat was worthwhile. When the conference resumed we listened to various leaders of organisations talking about*

<sup>7</sup> Scull, A. (1983) 'Community Corrections: Panacea, Progress or Pretence' in Garland & Young (eds) *The Power to Punish* Heinemann Educational Books

<sup>8</sup> Bauman, Z. (2001) *Community: Seeking Safety in an Insecure World*. Cambridge: Polity Press, p.1

*the dawning of a new era in youth justice, insisting on the pivotal role that they must play if success was to be achieved. Whilst the rock concert builds up to the headline act, this conference operated on a rationale that was completely the opposite. The conference hall emptied gradually at first but the momentum began to build up as we progressed down the bill. By lunch-time only half the original delegates were still in attendance. Those left included a YIP worker from Barking who, as we will see, had come to symbolise the disjuncture between the rhetorical desire to reach out to the marginalised and excluded and the limitations of an approach which centres the policy makers and practitioners. 'Robbo' had never been known to hold back when he saw what he perceives as a friendly face. Sure enough it was all; 'Alright geez, good to see you', but all the same there was something different, an uncomfortable sense that he wished we weren't there. 'What ya doin' here, you're not staying till the end are ya'.*

*It wasn't until we returned to the hall and looked at the programme of afternoon speakers that we realised why he had not been quite his usual self. There he was, second from last, listed as a front-line youth worker due to share the secrets of why his YIP had produced the most dramatic reduction in crime so far recorded. 'Robbo' is, if nothing else, a consummate performer. The fact that more than three-quarters of the audience had deserted the building by the time he took to the stage seemed not to bother him at all. He approached the lectern solemnly, dressed in his trademark baseball cap and 'geezers' gear. He picked up the microphone from the stand and walked four paces further toward the audience. No previous speaker had ventured further than the lectern because it somehow seemed natural that you shouldn't, and from a practical point of view that was the only place from which you could operate the power point.*

*'Are you ready for this?' he taunted the crowd. He stuck his chin out, his eyes bulged a terrible contempt. 'Would you do what my brethren and I do? Come out of your cosy offices and visit the places and people that I do. This is it people, you can talk and talk all you like about things that you aint ever seen, but unless you're prepared to come an look, roll your sleeves up like we have to do – we'e'e'll you're talk gonna make no difference. Come and live it like it is. It ain't easy, no no it sure it ain't easy. The ghetto don't close down at 5pm, we have to be there 24/7. Not Monday to Friday, 24/7. You take nice holidays. There int no holiday on the street, jail perhaps. People listen: its 365 days a year that you have to be out there for these young people. You don't know when anybody gonna get shot, need a solicitor, take too much smack in their arm.' Our laughter is met by filthy looks, fingers being placed to lips. 'I'm not a magician, I'm just there for the boys. I told them I wasn't there to preach, that I wanted to listen. They didn't want anything special; they said they wanted to play football. No big deal for you and me, but it was for them. I gave my boys a football team, and they respect me for that. That's what it's about – giving them respect and they respect you. Are you ready for this people, come and see what I see. Come and do what I do 24/7 365 days a year.....' He goes on and on for another ten minutes or so.*

*When he finished the crowd were on their feet clapping and cheering more enthusiastically than they had all day. Three senior policemen jumped up to hail the Billy Graham of delinquent miracles.*

*Whilst our mutters of 'liar' were met with contempt we knew this presentation did no justice to the work of LOCSP.*

## Section 2. Talking tactics: The purpose and method of enquiry

### Lies, damn lies and statistics

LOCSP has always been good at creating evidence. It is good at creating evidence on the sports fields, in schools and on the estates of East London. Real evidence, real activity with real impacts on real people's lives. It is also good at supplying the numbers, which provide funding bodies and politicians with the clearest picture of how far their investments are reaching, but it does so without passion, without belief and without faith in the validity of what it is supplying. Putting names on lists, providing numbers and accounting for petrol expenses never seemed much like community work. They produce the evidence because they have to. They do it because it is part of the game. Because if you don't complete the boxes you won't be able to get the funds to go and do the work you want to do. Some workers collect the necessary data more assiduously than others but they are motivated not by a belief in the benefits of data collection for its own sake but rather because they are more caught up in the 'game' than their colleagues.

On the other side of the fence there are some funding bodies who know that what is returned to them cannot be relied upon but that it has to be collected all the same, because without it they will not be able to tell a story which politicians and journalists can consume. The bottom line is numbers, even if those numbers can be fiddled, manipulated, made up, guessed and even if the numbers of attendees at a sports session do not reveal that a motorbike has been stolen by one participant in order to get there on time. The more enlightened always seek to augment such data with the more informative, contextual, qualitative stories which lie at the heart of the community development process. For it is in those stories that we are able to understand why and how sport might or might not play a part in widening horizons, installing discipline, generating a sense of responsibility, improving confidence, creating respect and the likelihood that it will do so.

In this sense LOCSP's disinterest and obligatory attitude towards the production of what are ultimately subjectively produced and interpreted statistics does not derive from hostility to the need to monitor and evaluate. Rather it is an outlook underpinned by the belief that long-term developmental projects require long-term intimate evaluation and it is this belief that prompted the commissioning of this research.

### Aims and focus

The research presented here is itself the result of a long term evaluative framework which has aimed to assess, at each stage of their development, the impact of LOCSP's estate based, sports-centred, community development interventions.

At the outset we proposed a number of objectives, which included our desire to:

- Monitor and analyse the development of LOCSP and specific sports based community interventions;
- Examine the delivery of coaching sessions, educational messages and sports activities;
- Measure the extent and assess the nature and focus of contacts with target groups;
- Account for the ways in which the programme's target groups receive, interpret and respond to organised and informal activities and contacts;
- Monitor and interpret the role and place that sport plays within the lives of target group members;
- Assess the effectiveness of sport as a vehicle for promoting community development and social inclusion;
- Assess the relationship between LOCSP, partners and funders;
- Consider the impact of racial, gender, age and other demographic factors on patterns of response;
- Establish the sustainability of community sport in the absence of outside structured opportunities.

## Methodology and evaluative structure

One of the points of departure of this research is our contention that meaningful evaluation requires a methodological strategy that goes beyond simple quantitative analysis. The shortfalls of such an approach are increasingly being recognised across academic, practitioner and policy making circles but without an associated effort to address the problems which existing mechanisms promote. The structure of urban regeneration programmes, characterised by short-termism and led by performance indicators, can result in evaluations which are, at best, only partial and, at worst, simply self-fulfilling. This, as Adam Crawford recognises, subsequently leads to the sponsorship of initiatives, which fulfil the often-limited stated criteria, and as such:

...can serve to extend a particular vision of crime control...[which tends] largely to be pragmatic and managerial. The forms of intervention tend to be short-term and situational. Those interventions, which are so beloved of funding bodies, the commercial sector and the media, are consequently accorded priority. As such, they tend to focus on target hardening, “designing out” crime, and other “technological fixes” at the expense of interventions, which question the social causes of crime.<sup>9</sup>

Taking this point on board, we believe there is a need to break the unhealthy cycle, whereby poor projects are sustained by poor evaluations, which simply pay lip service to previously set key performance indicators. The ‘tick-box’ mentality accompanying what has been termed ‘the new managerialism’ is of only limited application when utilised in the analysis of sporting intervention programmes. At its very best it can produce a numerical record of, for example, how many participants have not been arrested over a given period, or, how many were offered full-time employment etc.

However, the incomplete nature of this ‘data’ renders its usefulness limited. It is only when the quantitative method (used sparingly and effectively) is utilised to support a qualitative approach that we can achieve an evaluation which communicates the social structures, ‘feelings’ and context in which participants find themselves and how they respond to such pressures. Returning to our example, the ‘fact’ that somebody has not been arrested gives no indication as to whether that person has been involved in crime or not. Criminal statistics are notoriously unreliable, with research suggesting that the most optimistic figure for arrests as a percentage of total crimes committed is less than five per cent. For the purposes of our research it is important not just to establish whether an individual team member has or has not done something, but the reasons that stand behind the actions. In particular, of course, we are concerned with establishing to what extent participation has affected the individual’s commitment to a ‘criminal/non-criminal’ lifestyle, whilst at the same time checking for the effects of other variables.

As such, in our approach, a variety of methods of enquiry were adopted, located predominantly around capturing a sense of the actual lived experiences of the organisation’s staff and the participants in the selected areas - two contrasting housing estates in the East End of London and a group of individuals with an offending background from a broader geographical area across the East of the city.

Extensive participant observation was conducted in the office, ‘the café’, on the estates, at training sessions, matches and competitive tournaments in other parts of the UK and abroad as well as in policy forums and conferences. We aimed to provide detailed descriptions of the organisational contexts in which LOCSP’s work is situated, the engagement strategies employed, particular sporting practices and the social worlds that surround them. This strategy was utilised in order to elicit material on the particular style and function of sport and associated social activities in a variety of contexts as well as the ways in which sport interacts with participants and residents everyday lives.

A combination of intermittent life history interviews with participants and project staff as well as group qualitative interviews and discussions were also conducted in order to enable us to observe both individual accounts and the interactional factors, which affect the content of those accounts. These interviews were, in the main, loosely structured and in certain situations took the form of informal discussions rather than recognisable ‘interviews’. Through this approach we have sought to establish how a variety of individuals and social groups talk about the place of sport within their lives and account for the ‘taken-for-granted’ assumptions about how ‘facts’ and ‘realities’ come to be represented and the different ways in which communicative resources are used.<sup>10</sup> By combining these approaches we have established not only what people involved say about sport, community and issues of social exclusion but have also examined actual patterns of behaviour.

<sup>9</sup> Crawford, A. (1997) *The Local Governance of Crime: Appeals to Community and Partnerships*, Oxford: Clarendon Press

<sup>10</sup> Atkinson, M. (1990) *The ethnographic imagination: Textual constructions of reality*, London: Routledge

The research also included an archival dimension focusing on documentary sources relating to the role of sport in community development. In addition we conducted a survey of local archive sources to establish the social characteristics of the environments and estates where the study was based, including racial make up, patterns of migration, housing, the local economy and histories of community organisation. This material has been used to situate the place of sport within the social ecology of the areas and to explore sport's relationship with particular regional histories and notions of neighbourhood.

Having said all this, conscious that, as outsiders, researchers will always be closest to the staff who's work frames their enquiry, our objective was not to reveal life on the estates from the inside but rather to illustrate how sport has come to find a place within the more seductive armoury of social interventions.

These broad areas of enquiry have been framed by three principle foci:

- Organisational context;
- Engagement strategies;
- Sporting practice.

### *1. Organisational context*

This aspect of the work sought to trace the conceptual development of LOCSP and to examine the practical issues of financing, organisation and management. We consider the theoretical and motivational concepts, which lie behind the development of the programme and the contextual background provided by contemporary community development initiatives and the promotion of sport as an avenue for promoting social inclusion. This involved qualitative interviews with project managers, funders and a broad literature review. In addition, extensive participant observation was conducted in the LOCSP offices where the principal field researcher sought to become embedded within the structures of the organisation, as a member of 'staff'. Contact with external agencies was also monitored through attendance at policy forums, development meetings and conferences.

### *2. Engagement strategies*

This section of the work sought to focus on the ways in which sport is mobilised to engage with young people in the areas targeted by the programme as a vehicle for promoting community development and social inclusion.

Regular visits to each of the areas included in the study were made to monitor the approaches used to engage young people and residents on the estates targeted by the programme and their effectiveness in meeting the project's objectives and the response and group dynamics of participants. Throughout the period of research, efforts were made to build up contacts with local residents and participants in order to assess respondents' shifting attitudes towards the provision of sporting activities, the organisers and the programme's relationship with residents' lives. Intermittent life history interviews were conducted in both formalised individual and focus group sessions and through informal discussions and enquiries at various stages of the project's development

### *3. Sporting practice*

In order to effectively theorise the use of sport in community settings a series of training sessions, matches and tournaments were observed with a view to developing an understanding of the training strategy, group dynamics and the group's role in challenging or re-enforcing notions of self worth, confidence, personal fitness and teamwork. Analysis of these issues considered the impact of team and individual performances and sporting achievements. Crucially this aspect of the research also focused on the skills of the practitioners in drawing out the potential of participants and their approach towards delivery.

In addition to the observation of coaching activities, efforts were also made to extend the research beyond the formal activities of LOCSP so that the sport interventions could be situated within the broader context of residents' lives and everyday behaviour.

## The sample group

One of the key tasks for the research team during the first year of the research was to determine which of the teams run through the Programme should form the focus of the research. The rapid expansion of LOCSP meant that it was never going to be feasible to include all of the Programme's activities in the research. To have attempted to do so would in all likelihood have resulted in a superficial account and analysis. LOCSP's commitment to inclusion and equality issues, and the energy with which they pursue these, has resulted in the formation of numerous teams – each with its own rationale for inclusion in the Programme's workload. After careful consideration it was decided that two groups would form the nucleus for the research.

These groups include members' whose status as 'socially excluded' is distinct but whose identification as potentially problematic renders them, for the purposes of those who seek 'order' and safety, essentially similar. Embracing a qualitative approach, we sought to record the experience of negotiation and control as experienced by the members, and have tried to locate the work of LOCSP within the wider context of changing social policy.

*Group 1: 'Deependers'* – Consisted of individuals who had been referred to LOCSP through either the probation service or drug/alcohol agencies. They were engaged in a range of sporting activities and several participants had been integrated into the programme's football teams. The main reasons for including this group was that to different extents these participants were at the 'deep-end' of social exclusion and as such might be thought to present the most difficult challenges.

*Group 2: 'Wannabies'* – Consisted of teams of young men living on two large local authority housing estates. Many of the players had been identified by the police and other agencies as being 'at risk' in terms of their likely involvement in criminal and/or anti-social activity. Compared to the 'Deependers' these groups might be thought of as representing the 'shallower end' of social exclusion. One key reason for focusing on them was to assess whether or not early intervention is more or less effective than when administered at a later stage in the development of a 'deviant' lifestyle.

## Research team

In some respects the recruitment of the research team for this piece of work reflected the wider style of the organisation itself in that the researchers already had a history of involvement with the programme. This had derived from both the evaluation of previous interventions<sup>11</sup> and professional relationships with key workers in the organisation that had developed through an informal interest in each other's work. As such there was a sense in which the research team already had something of an intuitive 'knowing' of LOCSP, which would assist the research process and ease the issue of 'access', given the confidence that staff had in those that would be 'investigating' them.

At times these relationships have been compromised by the research process as the principal ethnographer's own biography clashed with those of project staff and as he found himself caught in the middle of disputes between staff and project participants which, whilst illuminating, brought into question the researcher's role in the organisation. Even where open access is provided to an organisation such as that granted at LOCSP it is unlikely that personal differences and tensions between the researcher and those they are engaged with will not emerge over the course of a three year period of study and, in that regard, this investigation was no different. We are confident however that these issues did not prevent us from capturing a sense of LOCSP's work and those that have been associated with it during that time.

In the conduct and analysis of the research the team also benefited from the particular skills relating to their specialist academic disciplines. Whilst Pat Slaughter works as a criminologist, Tim Crabbe is a sociologist with a specialist interest in the field of sport and leisure.

### Key issues

LOCSP believes that long-term, dynamic interventions require long-term qualitative research and evaluation.

<sup>11</sup> Crabbe, T. (2000) 'A Sporting Chance?: using sport to tackle drug use and crime, *Drugs: education, prevention and policy*, 7(4): 381-91; Crabbe, T. (1998) 'Going for Goals': An evaluation of the Tower Hamlets Drug Challenge Fund Project. London: Leyton Orient Community Sports Programme

## Section 3. 'In the boot room': Understanding the organisation

### A day at the office

*It's only ten and you don't expect to see many of them in. You walk through the front door and 'Graham' waves a hand and nods a head, and takes the details from a mother in Chingford:*

*'It's twenty seven pounds for the week. No the pitch isn't far from you, twenty minutes max if your driving a tractor.....However you like really; Switch, Solo, Delta, cheque.'*

*'Kev' is reading the local rag. Local Pensioners Stage Bingo Closure Protest screams the headline:*

*'Alright Pat, haven't seen you in a bit. Seen the Pompey result at the weekend'.*

*His legs are on the desk; he slouches back in his seat. In twenty minutes, he tells me, he is going to the town hall to give a presentation to various funders who have expressed tentative interest in giving financial backing to the proposed extension of his much lauded education programme.*

*'Ad' is sat in the computer room, he has the latest funding application form on his knee, before he fills it in he scans his favourite website to keep tabs on the latest developments in East European football.*

*The two work experience boys from one of the failing local schools slump bored in their chairs. One shows some initiative and future promise:*

*'Fancy a cuppa?'*

*'Zoë' bounces in. She usually bounces in, occasionally she storms in and nobody feels comfortable enough to ask why. When 'Zoe' bounces in she sings and dances to a 1970's disco anthem, she makes people laugh.*

*'My baby takes the morning train.....',*

*For all of that 'Zoe' is a bit of a singular soul, she does the banter but most of all she gets on with her work. At various times she has people come in to help her, other female footballers that she has either coached or previously played with. As Neil had hammered into her from the start 'It's your responsibility, you choose your coaches, you should know who is best for the job', indicating his trust and faith in her abilities.*

*All the others he has trusted have chosen men to help them, but then again they are men, their work is with boys and men. That 'Zoë' has decided to choose women to coach women and girls, to develop and raise the profile of female football, should be less than surprising.*

*'Zoë' commands a great deal of respect from those who work around her but, to a large extent, she works by herself. She does a fancy two-step, and then she sits by the phone, computer and files and gets on with the hustle and bustle of organising one of the most successful women's football academies in the south of England.*

*After 'Zoë' (on another day; after 'Kyle', after 'Sue', after 'Nat' – there is no fixed order to who troops in when) the others arrive. By eleven the place has shaken off its earlier calm and frantically goes about the business of bringing football to the community. The work experience boys (sometimes they are girls, but only sometimes) begin to experience work:*

*'When you've finished that for 'Kev' I've got some labels I need doing in the next twenty minutes'.*

*All of the tables and computers are taken, but seemingly not by the same person for more than twenty minutes or so. People are for ever getting up to go somewhere, to another desk, to a coaching session, to the meeting room to discuss strategy with office colleagues, to the town hall to clinch three years more funding or find another hurdle to jump through, to disseminate good practice at a conference. Many of those who come in the office never sit down. Coaches pick up bags of balls and stand around for ten minutes to tell those who are interested that Johnny Mason had a 'minger' in the cup game on Wednesday. Players come in and make themselves a cup of tea, sit on the edges of tables, flick through obscure world football magazines that 'Ad' subscribes to. It feels more like a terminus, a passing through point, than a settled place of work – a place where workers collect their thoughts, relax, plan their next move, talk*

nonsense, read the paper, before returning to the dirty work. Even the 'office staff' don't stay in the office all day. 'Graham' goes to coach, 'Ad' goes to haggle, and the bookkeepers keep irregular hours that never add up to eight.

Grant walks in about eleven-thirty. Grant shouldn't be walking in, he is on annual leave:

'Busy in here, can't be much work going on in that community'

It's typical Grant banter. Grant didn't metamorphose into Neil when he succeeded him as Director of the Programme, but he was equally suspicious of those who lingered too long in the comfort of the base camp.

'I thought you were on holiday Grant'.

'I am on holiday, I'm in Tenerife, it's lovely, wish you were here..... 'Ad', we gonna have this meeting? I've got a sun-tan to catch up on'.

Grant and 'Ad' retire to the meeting room.

While they talk and prepare their pitch for a meeting next week the main office sees a constant traffic of people coming and going. The telephone never seems to stop:

'Hello, community programme.....yes madam how can I help'.

'Graham' is first line of defence but as soon as he answers one call another phone begins to ring. Regardless of position everybody is expected to pitch in:

'Community programme.....yes, the person who deals with that is actually on the phone at the moment. Can I take a message?'

Sometimes you forget:

'Pat you gonna get that phone or what?'

In this space at least, the organisation comes together and everybody must play their part, pull their weight, be a team player. Individuals may be given individual projects but there is more to it than that. Earlier 'Ad' gave a talk about professionalism:

'When you answer the phone you should say, "good morning Leyton Orient Community Sports Programme", not, "Alright, what can I do for you?". We're not some Mickey Mouse second-hand car salesmen'.

When the phone rings next 'Kev' picks up the receiver and offers:

'Community Programme can I help?' and then puts his hand over his mouth and grimaces in recognition of his own lack of professionalism.

Just before one, 'Ad' and Grant emerge from the meeting room:

'I'm going up the caf' for a sandwich. Anyone coming?' Grant invites.

It's a ritual, there isn't a set lunch break, there are no set hours, but just before one the same invitation is made. Neil Watson used to ask, and now it is usually Grant. It's the 'lads' who go to the cafe. 'Zoe', 'Sue' and 'Nat' bring sandwiches in tupperware containers or go to Sommerfields for economy price sausage rolls. 'Kev' comes to the cafe occasionally but not that often, 'Ad' a bit more than him. 'Lads' in the sense of the football lads. The banter in the cafe moves away from the subject of work and reveals shared identities and pasts:

'Ere Grant, you remember Watsy who used to play for Notre Dame when we were at school? Decent player, used to play left back' 'Thomo' asks.

'Only gone and got himself one of those internet brides from Russia. A right dolly bird. The ugly fucker, she must have had a right shock when she got off the coach and spotted his boat'...

Not everybody who goes to the cafe went to the same school, but they tend to talk the same language. We walk back to the office. 'Dave' is stood in the car-park having a cigarette. 'Dave' looks after the finances, he wears a suit and smokes, he isn't one of the lads.

## Portakabins and boardrooms: The emergence of LOCSP

Portakabins are intended to house, temporarily, those who have the practical skills to build a bright new tomorrow upon the ruins of yesterday's crumbled edifices. Portakabins are not designed for comfort but imply imminent progress. They serve the purpose of providing crude shelter for those who have bigger projects in mind, other homes to go to, more substantial buildings to construct. They represent a stopgap or stepping stone even if some are left hanging around longer than was ever intended.

The portakabin, which housed Leyton Orient's Football in the Community scheme between 1995 and 2000, fitted into this category, its occupation by the scheme almost representing an extension of its life in the face of the stalled redevelopment of the stadium. Precariously perched on the north-east perimeter of the ground it almost seemed to spill into the gutter of Brisbane Road, apparently speaking volumes for the football club's perception of where its tenant fitted into the grander scheme of things.

There was never enough room in the place, which was always cluttered with bags of balls, cones and boxes of leaflets. In winter the office was too cold, on hot summers days it became a rat-infested sweatbox. Workers and coaches were instructed to stay away from the place whenever it was practically possible. But then even from the earliest days, before the portakabin, when Neil Watson became the club's first community officer and had a desk in the corridor of the main stand, the vision of what constituted 'a day at the office' had little to do with conventional notions of 'putting in a nine to five'.

This had much to do with the architect of the new programme who, according to the conventions of both professional football and sports development, might have appeared unqualified. Unassuming and seemingly naïve, a teacher on the run from the classroom, within the realm of football and community in 1989 his was not a face that had an obvious fit. At a time when football in the community was rapidly becoming the preserve of former professional footballers and a conventional sports development agenda, the chosen community officer offered something different, which had been learned during his time coaching for the community programme at Brentford.

Presented with a brief to target and engage social groups which were traditionally excluded from mainstream sport - young people, girls and women, people with disabilities, over fifties and minority ethnic groups - as well as improving the image of the club (which like many others at the time was tainted by the presence of hooliganism and overt racism) a mission soon emerged. At that time it was a mission to get as many people as possible involved in the scheme's programmes and people from the parts of the borough who had traditionally not engaged with organised football courses in particular. As Neil recalls:

It was that...dual role I guess, of trying to keep the Club happy by getting them a better public image, enlisting the support of one or two more players and getting a bigger and better behaved crowd...but all that was... fairly nebulous in a sense and the second thing was about - which interested me much more - was about how to use the name of the football club to engage with some of the kids around kind of Waltham Forest really. Because the local authority had run football courses before that, but only ran them in Chingford, a place called the Jubilee Sports Ground, where we still run them now, but they used to get 70-80-90 kids going along with their packed lunches and the parents would drop them off and pick them up. And I remember running a course really early on in Leyton and people telling me "kids in the South of the Borough don't really do that kinda stuff". And me thinking that my...mission was to prove them wrong, that kids would actually come along and get involved all over the Borough and again just running...twenty courses a week in the Borough, every hard play area, grassed fields, whatever just running loads and loads of courses, five-a-side clubs, after school clubs...and it slowly became a kind of mission to get as many people involved.

In this sense, in its earliest incarnation, LOCSP operated on a *modus operandi*, which was not dissimilar to the other football in the community schemes emerging around the country. It sold coaching courses to children who craved association with professional football. Kids liked to play football, even to dream of doing it for a job, whilst parents liked to believe that their kids could do anything. In keeping with wider understandings of the term, 'community' scheme had a nice ring to it, easier on the ear than commercial exploiter of little boys' dreams. Whilst community schemes up and down the country at the time were premised on an economic imperative that suggested little more, what was different in Leyton was the determination to extend provision into the zones of exclusion and the personal sacrifices that went with it:

The fact we organised twenty courses meant that kids could literally walk, you know, in the Borough, to a course. Literally it was on...bits of concrete in places in Leytonstone, you know there's no grass around there, its difficult to run a course, and we just used to run a coaching course every afternoon and send someone down and we never got more than fifteen, ten-fifteen kids on a course. But you know, so what, there was fifteen kids doing football and there was another twenty there, and there was a hundred up here, we used to get six or 700 on a half-term coaching course doing football. Not for the whole week, not for the whole day, but at the end of the week when we looked back at the register there was a massive amount of kids [who had been] with us. But I mean it's also a thing I guess, and I...mentioned this to staff about the kind of commitment it took to run that, because I was in here every single morning by about, certainly never any later than 6.30...with the cleaner, doing about two or three hours work in the morning before anybody else had arrived...and the rest of the day I was out in schools, coaching on school yards and doing all that stuff...and then I was back here at five or six o'clock and then I was staying here with reserve matches, first team matches, youth team matches, and quite often sleeping here...I mean I almost felt it needed that, it wasn't the kind of job at that stage that you could just dip in and out of, turn up at nine and expect to...achieve what you needed to achieve by five, so it was literally...you know a thirteen, fourteen hour day... [but] I guess a lot of people saw the potential very early on, a lot of people stuck around and... got it the way it is today...It ain't just me, its all for another ten people involved who have spent the majority of their working life here, over the last ten years, one way or another.

Despite the enthusiasm, which was underpinned by a sense of doing work that was fun with people who got on well together and had few other commitments more than any ideological principles, it was never a linear progression towards today's more professional outfit. Whilst lauded for its success in engaging with previously marginalised groups, funding crisis followed funding crisis, which acted as a wake up call to those involved. It taught the lesson that just doing a good job is never enough and the importance of strategic thinking, the need to be pro-active in planning for the future rather than merely being reactive.

The point was reinforced when the sports promoter Barry Hearn famed for his promotion of the snooker legend Steve Davis and the boxing rivals Chris Eubank and Nigel Benn, bought the club for a fiver in 1995 and promised that Brisbane Road would never again have an empty space on the terraces. Hearn never missed the opportunity in the media clamour that surrounded his latest venture to proclaim the beginnings of a philanthropic adventure, which sought to reclaim the Orient as a football club that properly represented the East End constituency that spawned it. Declaring to the local press at the time that:

I was born in Dagenham, so Leyton Orient is my local side - I was there when I was ten years old - and I believe that there is a role that supporters like me can play in the game...There is a tremendous buzz in working at this level, developing local talent working with the community, and having some fun. It is the greatest challenge that I have ever had in my sporting life - in twenty five years of involvement. What is the challenge? The challenge is not Premier League - it is survival, firstly, and, secondly, contributing something to the local community. Premiership football is not the people's game anymore - we are - clubs like Orient are the people's game.

Outside the formalities of public relations rhetoric it was clear that other memories of childhood had informed a different sentiment when he told the director of the community programme that in reality he "never went to football when I was a nipper. Orient was off the map, for mugs. It was round the corner, but so was the Salvation Army". Despite the populist appeal to all things 'community' it was clear that things were going to change and that this time the community programme would need to be prepared.

As such, whilst Hearn was later to declare that "we should be a focal part of the community and an asset to the community, and hopefully the community can become an asset to us. It is a partnership"<sup>12</sup> Watson was quick to the chase. He was convinced that unless he was made an offer that made commercial sense Hearn would fold the community scheme, viewing it as an expensive and unnecessary luxury, having already moved it from the Main Stand sponsors room to the aforementioned portakabin where the club shop, whose status had been raised in the new scheme of things, had previously been housed. As he recalls:

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<sup>12</sup> Sprott, R. (2002) Orient express, BlaqSport: A celebration of black sporting achievement

Over the course of the next two or three months I realised... what he meant was “I’m not interested in the community scheme and I’m not going to fund it, but...I’ll let you down slowly”...So I realised at that stage that the football club was going to become much more of a commercial animal, and I guess I spotted a chance to get out ...So what I said was, you know “Barry here’s an option for you to get out, let us do what we want and there’ll be a trade-off because we’ll never come to you for another penny again”. So it just made sense really...it was all thought through over a period of a year or two, and me and Grant kind of throwing this around, and...knowing where it was going over a period of time and knowing that the Club weren’t really committed to the community scheme. And us...saying “look there’s got to be a better way of doing things” and so we just started thinking, if this is our business, we’ll run it, because we think we’re the best people to run it and then we’ll make all the decisions on it.

In principle the potential benefits of the new arrangements were clear enough, provided the community programme maintained premises at the club. The scheme would benefit from its association with a professional football club without being tied to its commercial objectives or playing second fiddle to the primary focus of all professional clubs, in the shape of the on pitch performances of the ‘first team’. On the other hand the club lost responsibility for what appeared to be a commercially fragile but politically sensitive operation whilst gaining the attributed benefit of the free publicity associated with the community scheme’s work, along with the prospect of rental for the premises planned for the club’s proposed new stand. Furthermore, with a ‘smaller’ club like Leyton Orient there was far less prospect of an independent organisation working from within the club’s premises and carrying its name damaging the ‘brand’ in the way that might be feared at a big, media feeding frenzy like Manchester United. Indeed whilst funders might also shy away from donating money to a big Premiership club with a ‘loadsamoney’ image, it was precisely the association with football at a club with a more local, ‘community’ feel that was likely to lever in resources at Leyton.

Barry Hearn saw the sense in what was being suggested and, over the course of the next two years, things developed to the point where in 1997 Leyton Orient Community Sports Programme was constituted as a not for profit company limited by guarantee with its own board of eight trustees. These trustees themselves were not recruited blindly and reflected the organisation’s desire to engage with the issues and communities that surrounded them. Board members were in the main living and or working in the area and were invited to volunteer their expertise rather than see membership as an extension of their own job descriptions, which can be the case on management committees in the voluntary sector. As such they were expected to ‘bat for’ LOCSP, to offer a commitment without prejudice. A position, which, as we discuss below, was validated by subsequent events, which exposed the tensions, associated with more conventional arrangements.

#### Key issues

In its earliest incarnation, LOCSP operated on a *modus operandi*, which was not dissimilar to the other football in the community schemes emerging around the country. What was different was the determination to extend provision into the zones of exclusion.

Following Barry Hearn’s takeover of Leyton Orient in 1997 Leyton Orient Community Sports Programme was constituted as a not for profit company limited by guarantee with its own board of eight trustees.

#### Time for long trousers: Gaining independence and autonomy

The management philosophy, which was to be applied to the nascent organisation, was in part inspired by the co-operative approach espoused in *Maverick: Success Story Behind the World’s Most Unusual Work Place*, a business book by the Brazilian industrialist Ricardo Semler. In essence what was taken from the model was its far from unique emphasises on a management style which tries to empower workers to make their own decisions within a ‘flat’ operational structure, which is fundamentally oppositional to traditional bureaucratic hierarchies. Whilst Watson recognised that he would necessarily be the ‘boss’, guide the direction of the organisation, make crucial decisions, sack and hire people, etc. individual employees would nevertheless be encouraged to take charge of their own projects. There would be no space for time-wasting ceremonies of deferment and false praise – a meritocracy of sorts was envisaged where people would be given certain concessions of time and space to prove their contribution worthy of the overall project. As Watson put it whilst he was running LOCSP:

The whole business was...broken down into little components and that's what I think, well we haven't got it here, but that's what I'd like to have, you know, get the staff to run the football schemes well, alright, you run them brilliantly, run them how you want but go run them so that you get more money, so that they're your football schemes and not mine necessarily. I don't care as long as the work gets done, I don't need to have fifty staff, I don't need to, its not an ego trip, I don't get off on any of that...I like managing the organisation, but I don't get off on managing individuals, they manage themselves.

However, ultimately, after researching various options and considering their likely ramifications it was decided that the best working model that an independent LOCSP should adopt was that which applied to those organisations that had been granted independent charitable status. A purely co-operative model of the type discussed was ultimately recognised as un-viable, not because its ideological underpinnings had been discovered faulty, but because there seemed to be no space to accommodate such an organisation in the legal and commercial categories that facilitated entrepreneurial ventures in this sector. Instead LOCSP applied for and was granted independent charitable status.

Although this was an important and fundamentally crucial development, the organisation's autonomy remained constrained by the rules and governance of the Charities Commission's own regulatory framework. In this sense it is important to recognise the new boundaries and regulations that must be observed and which continue to constrain the new and more innovative projects that the programme aspires to pioneer. Indeed it reminds us that for any grand claims of independence, the autonomy enjoyed by LOCSP is necessarily 'relative'. For all the spaces that can be exploited and enjoyed there are also walls and perimeter fences, new atmospheres and environments to be adapted to if they are to survive and flourish.

Nevertheless its determination to follow its own path was clear from the start and reflected an internal consciousness that the work in which they were engaged was changing and required new skills and broader horizons. When LOCSP was constituted as a charity, the national football in the community scheme, FFE & VTS, were invited to nominate a trustee. Some time later a potential conflict of interests emerged when minutes of a trustees meeting, where a discussion about the appropriateness of FFE & VTS's influence on LOCSP's work had taken place, were passed to the organisation's national officers. A dispute ensued which led to the involvement of the football club and seemed to centre around the national scheme's desire to maintain its 'authority' over its constituent members.

In large part the conflict related to the development of LOCSP as an organisation rather than personalities or power struggles. Quite simply the organisation had outgrown the structures, which had supported its early growth. Having just broken its ties with the club, LOCSP felt unable to live with the attempt to impose external restraints on their activity and ultimately the FFE & VTS representative was asked to leave the board of trustees which, amidst a great deal of acrimony, in turn prompted FFE & VTS to withdraw LOCSP's right to be a member of the national scheme. Whilst FFE & VTS and the club had at one time been significant and supportive partners, this parting of the ways was accepted by LOCSP as part of the process of 'growing up'. Even when faced with the prospect of the club showing an interest in establishing their own Football in the Community Scheme once again, LOCSP remained unperturbed. From their perspective, they felt that no-body was going to be able to compete with their core business. If the club wanted to try, that was up to them.

This period, during which LOCSP gained independent charitable status and its autonomy has been characterised by one of the organisation's trustees as the moment of realisation that they "had to become a long trousers organisation". For all the excitement that the Programme's new 'freedoms' inspired there was also the growing awareness that it involved taking on new responsibilities and duties as well as being subject to a whole new raft of requirements and regulations. There was a recognition that LOCSP would have to be much more hard nosed, given the tendency towards assumptions that community organisations work for nothing. As the Director reflected:

So what we try and do is kind of shift the paradigm I suppose about what this...work is really about. I think it's incredibly important, but you can't exist on this...do it just for the love of it almost, which is what people perceive that you're doing...So we've just become more business like, more...professional.

Part of this professionalism also involved developing a degree of market 'savvy' and a willingness to work on the presentation, marketing and media representation of LOCSP. Given the organisation's target groups and the

attraction of participating in organised sporting activity, community organisations of this type will always run the risk of attracting negative publicity relating to the notion of ‘rewarding the wicked’. In order to avoid this type of simplistic representation, LOCSP placed a significant emphasis on media management, both to protect the reputation of the organisation and also to protect their participants.

As their reputation has grown, LOCSP has increasingly been called upon to host ‘launches’, ‘photo shoots’ and ‘celebrity visits’ in order to promote new government policies and funding opportunities. As such there was an imperative to protect participants from being held up in a goldfish bowl, as ‘exhibits’ from the urban jungle. Equally the organisation recognised the need to provide access, characters and storylines for the media to avoid the sensationalism that can surround discussions of urban deprivation. One strategy was to engage journalists and publications with a more intimate interest in the work of the organisation and its context to write articles for the mainstream press and passages for in-house publications.<sup>13</sup> Indeed the organisation’s willingness to commission this piece of research was undoubtedly partly influenced by the same motivations. In this sense the media management practiced by LOCSP, rather than hiding stories was concerned to put as much on show as possible whilst attempting to minimise the disruption to the core work of the programme.

### Key issues

The management philosophy, which was to be applied to the nascent LOCSP, proposed a ‘flat’ operational structure, fundamentally oppositional to traditional bureaucratic hierarchies. For all the excitement that the Programme’s new ‘freedoms’ inspired there was also the growing awareness that it involved taking on new responsibilities and duties as well as being subject to a whole new raft of requirements and regulations.

### ‘Ask for forgiveness not permission’: Organisational culture and office dynamics

A symbolic moment in the establishment of LOCSP’s credentials as a serious organisation came with the completion of the new south stand at Leyton Orient’s stadium, into which LOCSP was re-located. In comparison to the previous ‘temporary’ accommodation it was akin to being upgraded from the cheapest single in a hotel to the Presidential Suite. The main room was large enough to house three clusters of desks. Running parallel to the main office were three smaller rooms which now housed a kit room, a meeting room and a computer office and photocopying room. From this location there was easy access to the stand’s other facilities including the match day function room for hosting presentation ceremonies and visits and indeed the pitch and seating areas themselves for the staging of matches.

With such a transition comes the prospect of cultural change. Portakabins are essentially democratic workspaces; the transient nature doesn’t lend itself to the hierarchical colonisation of space traditionally found in more permanent places of work with their boardrooms, typing pools and management offices. Yet whilst LOCSP moved premises the attempt was made to retain an egalitarian floor plan. Nobody, right up to the Director, had a fixed desk or table, which they could call their own. Some people had their favourite places but if somebody else was already sat there by the time they got to work they found somewhere else. This arrangement helped those who work there and those who came to visit understand something of the nature of what was being attempted. Staff were still encouraged to use the office sparingly, to understand that for most of them their real work was to be done outside of its confines.

Despite the move and the administrative framework in which LOCSP operated the organisation continued to be run on the basis that staff are largely left to their own devices. As Watson put it:

All I want to do is appoint members of staff who just go out and get on with it, and then we chat, if there’s problems then we’ll resolve it, eh, I mean... they’re the experts, every single one of them [needs to be] the expert in what they do and they [need to] know more about it than I do.

Staff then were encouraged to get on with their own work in the manner which they saw best. As long as they could be contacted they were encouraged to be out there ‘doing it’. It was recognised that if they could use their

<sup>13</sup> Brown, M. (2002) Who needs Japan when we’ve got the Orient?, TES, June 7th 2002

time working at home better than it would be a waste of everyone's time if they came in to the office. They were encouraged to take risks, to be bold and to take responsibility rather than to ask for direction as symbolised in the words, which were once placed on the notice board "Ask for forgiveness not permission". But as managers, captains of the ship, both of LOCSP's Directors took their own work extremely seriously. A suspicious eye was quickly cast upon those football development coaches who spent increasingly long hours talking over the weekend's results, drinking tea, sitting on the computer, wallowing in the freedom extended to them:

He's getting too comfortable y'know, "'Thomo' you joined the Samaritans or are you still a coach for us – just wondering like, you spend more time on the fucking phone than Busby".

Those who hardly ever came in were also subject to critical scrutiny. Those who missed appointments, who weren't contactable at home when they should be, had the book thrown at them. The operation was run on trust; long lengths of rope were freely available for those who wanted to hang themselves. Only those dedicated to the cause, those who can be counted on, who proved themselves consistently reliable stayed on board. Certainly under Watson's stewardship there was no space for personal friendships or loyalties to get in the way of the job at hand:

I've had to get rid of some really nice guys...I would just get them in the office and say that we didn't need them anymore. When Grant would find out about it he would get in a bit of a nark about it and we wouldn't be talking properly to each other for a few days but he would usually come round to my way of thinking and things would get back to normal.

In many respects LOCSP's 'success' can then be related to its status as an exemplar of the 'flexible organisation', increasingly held up as the model for successful business practice in the contemporary era. Its organisational style might be contrasted with the conventional organisation of public sector community sports provision through its closer adherence to developments at the cutting edge of the commercial sector.

*Table 1: Organisational framework<sup>14</sup>*

Traditional organisation	LOCSP
Labour as an expendable spare part	Staff as a resource to be developed
Breakdown of tasks - single skills	Multiple broad skills
External controls (supervisors, procedures)	Internal controls (self-regulation)
Hierarchical, autocratic style	Flat, participative style
Competition, conflict	Collaboration
Primacy of Organisation's purposes	Shared interests, purposes
Alienation	Commitment
Risk averse	Innovative

<sup>14</sup> Adapted from Cross, M. (1985) 'Flexibility and integration at the workplace', *Employee Relations*, 17 (1), p.4

### Key issues

A symbolic moment in the establishment of LOCSP's credentials as a serious organisation came with the completion of the new south stand into which LOCSP was re-located. Whilst LOCSP moved premises the attempt was made to retain an egalitarian floor plan. Staff were still encouraged to use the office sparingly, to understand that for most of them their real work was to be done outside of its confines. Staff were encouraged to take risks, to be bold and to take responsibility rather than to ask for permission. In many respects LOCSP's success can then be related to its status as an exemplar of the 'flexible organisation', increasingly held up as the model for successful business practice.

## Transfer windows: Arrivals and departures

### *Releasing players*

In any organisation there is normally an element of tension surrounding the degree of security of tenure. Despite its humanitarian outlook LOCSP is no different in this regard from any other contemporary business unit. Its need for commitment, initiative and flexibility in equal quantity places demands that are beyond the measure of many, whose limitations are easily revealed in the midst of such a hive of activity.

It can be quite difficult to adjust to an organisation which is run according to a logic which invites people to manage themselves and which accords the greatest respect to those whose work is to be found at the 'front line'. Certain qualities come to be regarded as admirable and worthwhile, embodying the appropriate 'cultural capital' to do the work that LOCSP is concerned with. As circumstances change though, previously admired talents can appear to be redundant if they are deployed in a fashion which is out of kilter with the ever-shifting culture and orientation of the organisation. The confirmation of that redundancy often came swiftly and could appear ruthless.

Throughout the life of LOCSP individuals have come and gone as the organisation has outgrown their capacities. There are those who were distinct from most employees by virtue of the fact that they weren't out there getting their hands dirty, being 'one of the boys', playing football. Then there were those who were uncomfortable with the development of the organisation and its movement into new areas of work and those who were 'too comfortable', taking it easy when there was important work to be done.

The philosophy of the organisation is one which does not lend itself easily to those in search of sympathy. Whilst co-operative, with a fierce collective belief in the merits of what it does, LOCSP's work stands or falls on the ability of its staff to stand on their own two feet, to be self-reliant, to get on with it. In this sense it reflects the masculinist tradition of the football industry, which is suspicious of vulnerability, weakness and depression.<sup>15</sup> But this was never articulated as personal. There may have been personal animosity and personality clashes at times but management of the shifting staffing requirements has always been strictly about protecting the interests of the organisation.

As such LOCSP has been no stranger to the concept of redundancy. As their work evolved and new skills were required and old ones became superfluous, coaches, development workers and office staff have all readily been moved on or required to change direction. The flow of human traffic through the office has moved with the times, reflecting the changes in the wider environment and funding streams.

### Key issues

Whilst co-operative, with a fierce collective belief in the merits of what it does, LOCSP's work stands or falls on the ability of its staff to stand on their own two feet, to be self-reliant, to get on with it.

<sup>15</sup> See Wagg, S. (2004) 'With his money, I could afford to be depressed': markets, masculinity and mental distress in the English football press'. In S. Wagg (Ed.) *British football and social exclusion*, London: Routledge

## Transfers

The departure of Neil Watson was an altogether more drawn out process than many of the other departures from the organisation. For, whilst disease is best nipped in the bud, tackled early and vigorously, losing a guardian is a more sensitive business. For some time we had sensed something akin to dissatisfaction on the part of LOCSP's first Director. A restlessness informed both by the limitations of what was left to do and the Director's perception of his own limiting influence upon the organisation. Neil Watson was acutely aware that in many respects his departure might be seen as a critical moment in the history of LOCSP and a threat to its future but his talents were increasingly coveted elsewhere and he was conscious that if he did not leave when he did, he might never get the chance again.

In many respects Neil had himself outgrown the organisation. The Football Association, Sport England, DCMS and others, increasingly courted his views on the role of football in tackling social exclusion. He was invited to contribute to Lord Bassam's Working Group on Football Disorder and finally was asked to join the Football Foundation's Community and Education Panel. He had also been involved in the consultancy that led to the identification of the first wave of Positive Futures, a sports based social inclusion programme within the Home Office. It was Positive Futures, which finally landed him. Following a number of flirtations it was the opportunity to take his experience into the heart of government policy and to roll out a programme of interventions nationally that secured the deal.

It was a shock to the organisation but Neil had always had confidence in his deputy Grant and his ability to take on the leadership role. In many respects he saw him as more ideally suited to the task than himself. The way that LOCSP had been organised meant that there was no 'manager's' job in the conventional sense of the term. There was a front face to be deployed but in many respects it was Grant that embodied what LOCSP was all about. Whilst stoic, understated and happier working with the young lads on the estates than making presentations at seminars, his suspicion of glory hunters and indifference to those in positions of 'power' epitomised LOCSP's 'soul'.

Whilst Neil had prepared the ground for his own departure he was equally conscious not to leave a Blueprint. He had been asked by the trustees to produce a business plan, which was duly completed, but it was really for their benefit rather than the organisation. Business plans are basically anathema to what LOCSP is about and the organisational philosophy, which had driven it forward. Its work was about spontaneity and the freedom to take risks "to be able to get up one morning and decide to start a community radio station" and then not worry when it didn't materialise. Neil was convinced that LOCSP would survive and that enough key individuals were in place to ensure that it would find its own new directions. Whilst central to the developments that had transformed the vision of what community sports work was over the previous decade, LOCSP had become far bigger than one man. Indeed the organisation was becoming increasingly driven by the twin forces of the expansion of major external funding sources relating to the social exclusion agenda (which perversely had led to the former Director's departure) and the recognition of the organisational talents of its remaining staff on the football development side. As 'Ad' reflects:

...obviously we didn't replace the Director because Grant moved up so there was a gap there which 'Sol' then moved up to fill. So internally basically we're doing a lot more work with sort of more support coming from...part-time staff and the existing staff to get things done. And at the same time, I mean when Neil left, it was just at the time of all the big money coming through for the summer so we had to manage that quite quickly and then since then it's been sort of a heady process...It's been an interesting year because... obviously we had Neil leaving and then the administrator left and since then two of our sort of developers have left, but that's all been a part of the transition really.

From Grant's perspective it was a matter of letting the organisation continue to play to the strengths of its various members of staff. Whilst his own workload inevitably increased and involved more of a contribution to the institutional face of LOCSP, others continued to do what they did well.

### Key issues

Whilst LOCSP's first Director had prepared the ground for his own departure he was conscious not to leave a Blueprint. Since his departure the new Director followed a policy of letting the organisation continue to play to the diverse strengths of its various members of staff.

### *New signings*

Whilst LOCSP had long sought to ensure that, as an organisation, its staff base reflected the age, gender, racial and social background of those it worked with, it recognised that the best recruits are sometimes those who stumble across an organisation rather than those on the career ladder or who are attracted by the bright lights of a job advertisement. 'Ad' is one such individual. 'Ad' is no product of a 'youth academy' or Sport England training camp. He is something of a maverick. His route into the office was unorthodox. Having established contact with the organisation in 1997 through his work as a research assistant for the charitable grant giver, the Sir John Cass Foundation, his own politically informed fascination with football and its wider social impact prompted him to develop the relationship when his contract with the Foundation ran out. He rang, in the manner of Boys from the Black Stuff's Yosser Hughes, to ask for a job. Learning that LOCSP had lost its administrator he asked if he could take on the role. The answer was no. So he volunteered to come in one day a week to look at funding opportunities and was told that he could in order to see how things went. He was delighted even though it was November 1999 before he was finally taken on full-time... Five years later he secured the final element of the £7 million of funding which allowed the developers to begin construction of the SCORE project which he initiated, guaranteeing the provision of community sports facilities for the people of Leyton for the next generation.

In some senses 'Ad's' engaging eccentricity exemplifies the point that there are no models for successful community sports practice, only individuals. As Neil Watson suggests:

People say, you know, I need an 'Ad' when they come here...they think they need someone who can find them some money. But I don't think there is anybody else like 'Ad', I mean I think he's completely unique in terms of what he brings the organisation, you know...he certainly never worked for an organisation that needed to raise money before...he's just got involved in the culture of the organisation. I don't think we could have got him if we'd advertised and interviewed. I don't think we would have got an 'Ad', [I think it is often the case that] people like him find you rather than you find them.

By the same token though, it is the cocktail of characters of great personality and commitment who provided the blend of skills required to work in this multi-dimensional field and who drove LOCSP, encouraging innovation and a restless quest for the new, the bold and the exciting. There was a firm belief in the organisation that the next generation of staff would not be drawn from the ranks of conventional mainstream sports organisations or the burgeoning army of sports development graduates. Increasingly there was a commitment to the training and education of the fourteen to nineteen year old participants in LOCSP's schemes with a view to encouraging them to work on the programme. As 'Ad' points out:

An off-shoot of that has been for 'Sol' and 'Graham' to devise their own community coaching course, education course, because what we're finding is we're not getting the sort of people we want through to work on the areas we want them to work on. They're coming through the traditional FA model of this is a football coach, this is what a football coach does, and so we're now writing materials which will provide us with qualifications that we can run courses that will bring through actually what we need.

Aside from the general courses that LOCSP run, the coaching staff at LOCSP have developed Open College Network Courses, which are geared to the needs of the community sports coach. These include:

- An Introduction to the Football Industry and Coaching - OCN Level 1/2;
- Introduction to Football Coaching - OCN Level 1/2;
- Introduction to Weightlifting - OCN Level 1/2;
- Introduction to Weight Training Instructing - OCN Level 1/2;
- Football in the community Club Coach - OCN Level 3.

The Football in the Community Club Coach course is distinct from the Football Association's Level One and Two Coaching Awards and is specifically designed to develop the skills required to do the kind of coaching work that LOCSP is involved in and covers ten key areas of study including:

- Organisational skills;
- Planning & evaluating football coaching sessions;
- Sports psychology;
- Counselling skills;
- Emergency Aid;
- Child protection;
- Safety in sport;
- Organisation of football tournaments;
- Improvisation and adapted games;
- ten hours of practical coaching work experience.

Additionally LOCSP engaged with Springboard Islington to provide vocational and practical training for young people identified by the programme who were interested in work in the sports and leisure industry under the banner of Entry to Employment (e2e).

### Key issues

Key members of staff are often those who stumble across an organisation rather than those on the career ladder and it is the variety of 'characters' and individuals of great personality and commitment drives LOCSP, encouraging innovation and a restless quest for the new, the bold and the exciting.

### The search for funds

One of the principle complaints within the voluntary sector relates to the insecurity of funding but so much of the success of LOCSP has been built on its ability to respond to the needs of funding bodies and its entrepreneurial flare for finding the next opportunity. In many respects it thrives in this environment. Whilst he was Director of the organisation Neil Watson argued that LOCSP:

will always be a hand to mouth organisation, you know, we can have, we've got a three year business plan which talks about where we want to be and the projects we want to do, but the reality is we've got to find the wages for next month. And that's just the nature of the beast and I mean we're never going to change that, we're never going to have anybody that comes in and underwrites the scheme so we can just get on and do what we want to do. It's the nature of the voluntary sector, unfortunately... [but] there's also a lot to be said for I think organisations who live this kind of life where we have a backs to the wall mentality. We've got to get the staff to know that, you know... the only way we're going to get more funding to do what we want to do is by convincing everybody that what we do is worth funding in the first place. So... yeah, [it] gives us that edge.

This perspective is partly borne out of a personal experience, which had threatened to bring Leyton Orient's community scheme to a close at the end of the first period of funding. A situation which was only curtailed by a great deal of lobbying and negotiating with a series of funding partners and which set the tone for the coming years. The lesson was re-enforced when Neil Watson was seconded to work with the ARC Theatre Ensemble for a year on the production of the anti-racist theatre production *Kicking Out* and was struck by the company's determination to secure funding for their projects and the passion that they displayed to potential backers.

...they used to go there and sell it and wear their heart on their sleeve and convince everybody that that's what they wanted to fund. And so we did it...we started to do that, we started to say alright, how do we make these things happen ourselves? And we started to get involved in Single Regeneration Budget programmes, only one or two, for the first two or three years, renegotiated our deal with the local authority, said you used to give us a grant out of your budgets, we said keep it in your budget, we don't want it any more, we're going to make an application for what we think we're worth and if it doesn't get supported it doesn't get supported.

But at the same time whilst LOCSP is known as a community sports programme, under this arrangement funding streams dictate its activity, whether a project is worth £500 or £4 million:

We're kind of opportunistic, you know, if there's a bit of money there, we think we can do the project and it's good for us, we do it...I don't have this...sense that, you know, we have to be something, or heading for something.

With the arrival of 'Ad', that opportunism became more directed, more focused and more strategic in terms of an engagement with the government's social exclusion agenda. 'Ad' is not like anyone else who works for LOCSP. He is passionate about everything that the organisation does, but his passion is often displayed in uncharacteristic ways. Buried away in a DCMS web site in the midst of the hullabaloo of the office he might blurt out excitedly 'it's all about capacity building, fantastic!' whilst others ignore him or shake their heads happy in the knowledge that 'Ad' is doing his stuff. His is the head peering over the other side of the walls of social exclusion, deciphering the mystical jargon of government agencies and pouring over the minutia of policy documents and their associated funding streams. 'Ad' likes this stuff, he loves it, spent Saturday nights devouring it and excitedly recognising the ways in which LOCSP's talents might coalesce with the latest twists of government policy. His enthusiasm was paid back in buckets:

we're getting a lot more, I mean our turnover's gone up from 300 (thousand) or so three or four years ago to 850 to a projected over a million for this year...We're now getting far more resources from government related funds, so if it is Connexions, Learning Skills Council, the Association of London Government, borough grants, Home Office, Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, New Opportunities Fund - all these funds are now coming through, coming through government originally then being fed out rather than us applying to trusts...the way we're approaching it now is that we've got these hubs of cluster areas of projects and each one of the staff is expected to contribute to each of the hubs, because...what we've done in writing the bids is replicate, just keep on replicating [the search for funds]. So we're saying that in these areas these kids will be getting this programme and [the funding strategy is] standardised. So there'll be a lot more cross working now. And I think we're going to be knocking a lot more of the smaller funders on the head.

Reflecting on the wider tendency to knock the successful which manifests itself in English football culture as much as elsewhere, in some ways this move away from smaller funders becomes unavoidable as the winning of larger contracts starts to close off access to smaller local grants:

Now we've kind of, you know, [got a] fairly high profile in the Borough as a voluntary sector organisation that's getting loads of money. Yeah, we get it from all sides, you know. We didn't get a grant the other week for £5,000 for a project in Leytonstone 'cos one of the councillors said, "ah, they've got lots of money, they don't need any more". Right through to community groups who kind of say, "Leyton Orient, they don't know what they're doing, I think you're much better than them". You do set yourselves up as kind of being...important locally and so people then want to have a go at you and a pop at you.

At the same time though, LOCSP's bigger aspirations have not always been satisfied. In 2002 the organisation submitted an application to the Sport England Lottery Fund under the auspices of the Sport Action Zones Programme with a view to establishing a bridge between local people and the proposed SCORE community sports facility, which was ultimately rejected. The logic of the proposal was in LOCSP's view incontrovertible. The organisation's confidence in its own abilities and the sense in ensuring that the major capital investment going into SCORE was backed by an associated community development plan seemed complete. Yet from Sport England's perspective it was precisely this integration that was problematic, as they were unable to discern the vision of SCORE from that for the proposed SAZ. In this sense it was ultimately the frameworks for funding and the assessment process, which were limiting rather than LOCSP's engagement with the principles of community sports development. In the end, funding for the new phase of Sports Action Zones was in any case withdrawn, whilst the SCORE project went ahead with a significant investment from Sport England's other funding streams.

Beyond the mechanics of identifying funding sources and submitting applications, ultimately the organisation's capacity to secure funds relates to two principle qualities, which run through its work, namely:

### *1. Flexibility*

The flexibility to move into new areas of work and for staff to move across different projects. LOCSP relies upon an extensive pool of part-time and casual coaching staff that can be drawn upon during intensive periods of work whilst not overloading the organisation with full-time permanent members of staff who may need to be laid off when funding streams close. Whilst this arrangement may appear exploitative it is also reflective of the principle focus on the needs of those that the organisation serves. The flexibility of the organisation meets not only the administrative needs of LOCSP but also the diverse interests and needs of those who engage with the programme's work, as we consider later.

### *2. Credibility*

LOCSP's attraction to funding partners is however also located in the organisation's credibility as a consistent provider of community sports interventions in areas where other agencies have found young people to be hard to engage with. There is a track record, which precedes the State's forays into the realms of community sports provision. That track record is itself consequential of LOCSP's own unique approach, which has evolved, not from a statutory manual but from the lessons learned through the practice of community sports provision. In this sense the funders might be regarded as having followed the work rather than the more conventional tendency for work to follow funding streams. This credibility is also found in the faces of participants who are attracted by the association with a professional football club but also, and more crucially, the skills of the staff they encounter which we will consider in more detail in later sections.

#### **Key issues**

Much of the success of LOCSP has been built on its ability to respond to the needs of funding bodies and its entrepreneurial flare for finding the next opportunity. Ultimately the organisation's capacity to secure funds relates to two principle qualities, which run through its work - flexibility and credibility.

## Section 4. 'Kick off': Communities, Engagement and Cultural Capital

### Defining LOCSP's communities

Leyton Orient Football Club, where LOCSP has its home, is situated close to the heart of Leyton within the London Borough of Waltham Forest on the eastern side of the capital. Whilst a considerable amount of work goes on in the Borough, focused around young people, housing estates, girls and women, refugees, schools and people with disabilities, LOCSP's interventions extend well beyond Waltham Forest itself. The estate based activities in particular initially emerged and developed in the neighbouring boroughs of Tower Hamlets, Hackney and Barking & Dagenham. More than anything else this is a reflection of the tendency for government funding of social inclusion interventions to be targeted at the most deprived areas according to the standardised indices of social deprivation. Our analysis here is primarily focused then on two of those areas and a further project whose locus was around a particular client group rather than a specified geographical area.

The area based work was centred around the Positive Futures programme. Launched in March 2000, Positive Futures is a national programme now managed within the Home Office Drugs Strategy Directorate. It then had an advisory group made up of representatives from the Department of Health, Department of Culture, Media and Sport, Connexions (Department for Education and Skills), Sport England, the Youth Justice Board and the Football Foundation. Its overall aim is to have a positive influence on individual participants' drug use, physical activity and offending behaviour by widening horizons and access to lifestyle, educational and employment opportunities.

Each of the twenty-four first phase projects was to be based around the provision of a variety of locally appropriate sporting activities and other opportunities for engagement. They were targeted at the most vulnerable and 'at risk' young people between the ages of ten and nineteen, in neighbourhoods identified as amongst the twenty per cent most deprived in the country. Barking & Dagenham and Hackney were identified as two of the initial areas in which the programme was to be delivered on the basis of a partnership between the local youth offending team and a range of agencies including local authorities, charities, sports clubs and crime reduction agencies.

Following local negotiations and working with youth offending teams, LOCSP was identified as the lead agency in each of these boroughs where it was determined that the work would focus on one specific estate in each case. These were the Gascoigne estate in Barking and the Woodbury Down estate in Hackney where the Youth Justice Board had just established local Youth Inclusion Programmes (YIPs).

### *The Gazza*

Barking and Dagenham emerged as a key population centre between the wars when the London County Council built a series of estates to re-house the occupants of inner city slums in the East End and North of London. The area was quickly established as a stubbornly working class district, in Willmott's terms a 'one class colony'.<sup>16</sup> Despite relatively high levels of employment more recent studies continue to reveal the area as one in which 'strong, traditional family and cultural processes relying on non-formal ways of 'getting by'...have a constraining impact on social mobility. In Barking and Dagenham this is because intergenerational survival strategies have not been dependant upon formal qualifications and academic achievement, hence reducing the likelihood of social mobility'.<sup>17</sup>

The Gascoigne estate in the south west of the Borough consists of approximately 2000 homes, predominantly social housing, made up by a mixture of inadequate low rise, low specification balcony access flats and high rises so typical of early 1970s housing developments. These homes accommodate a mixed populace, less than fifty per cent of which is employed and, in contrast to the rest of the borough, a third of which is non-white. Most households do not own a vehicle and over fifteen per cent have a lone parent living with dependent children. In contrast to Willmott and Young's nostalgic representation of family and kinship in the East End the estate appears increasingly flimsy and transient. It is also, if the populist rhetoric is to be believed, pervaded by the fear of crime<sup>18</sup> which has foundation in the Gascoigne ward of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham being in the top three wards in each category of crime statistics bar one in the Borough's most recent audit of crime

<sup>16</sup> Willmott, P. (1963) *The Evolution of a Community: A study of Dagenham after forty years*, London: Routledge

<sup>17</sup> O'Brien, M. & Jones, D. (1997) *Young People, Family Life and Education in Barking and Dagenham*, *Rising East*, 1, 1, p.115

<sup>18</sup> Golder, A. (2003) *Crime rates fall, but fear is still rife*, *The Recorder*, 1st October, 2003

and disorder.<sup>19</sup> The acquisitive nature of this crime is revealed by the ward's status as having the highest rates of reported crime for residential burglary and theft from a motor vehicle in the Borough.

### *Woodberry Down*

Woodberry Down is a similarly run down social housing estate which lies in the New River ward in the north west of Hackney in North East London which was ranked as the fourth most deprived local authority area in England and Wales in the Government's 1998 Index of Deprivation. Initiated in the period immediately after World War II the core housing blocks were completed in 1948 and augmented in the 1960s and 1970s by high-rise blocks of flats. Similarly to the Gascoigne there are over 2000 homes on the estate which house up to 9,000 people, over ninety per cent of which were found to be council tenants in a recent survey.<sup>20</sup> In the New River ward, the smallest district for which data is available, almost thirty per cent of the population is under the age of 16. The estate is multi-cultural and multi-racial, thirty five per cent of residents in the ward define themselves as non-white (the majority of whom are black) and over twenty per cent as Jewish whilst in twenty per cent of households a language other than English is spoken at home. Over recent years a significant number of refugee families have been housed in the area.

At the time of the last census only twenty six per cent of residents aged fifteen to sixty-five were employed full-time with a further nine per cent employed part-time. Of the remainder, twenty six per cent were either unemployed or unable to work. This picture of relative deprivation is reinforced by the point that, at the time of the 2001 census, in the New River ward nearly sixty per cent of households had no car.<sup>21</sup>

The estate is similarly blighted by both the experience of crime and an associated anxiety towards crime. According to the Metropolitan Police's Crime Reporting Information System acquisitive crime in the form of residential burglary, as on the Gascoigne, was proportionately higher in New River than in the rest of the borough for the period prior to the commencement of our research. According to the local Police and Community Safety Unit a disproportionate number of these offences occur on the Woodberry Down estate.<sup>22</sup>

Organised sessions took place on and around the targeted estates on an almost daily basis generally with between twenty and forty participants on each occasion. Sometimes the numbers were smaller but sometimes they were greatly increased depending upon the time of day or year. As a rule of thumb an average of around thirty participants attended each session or match. On this basis, in the region of 400 to 500 contacts were made on a weekly basis. These were not new people on each occasion as repeat attendance is welcomed and indeed encouraged as this is the basis for establishing relationships which enable effective interventions to be made.

The Youth Inclusion Programme (YIP), which relied heavily on the Positive Futures project led by LOCSP, was hailed in 2002 in the local and national press as contributing to a fifty eight per cent fall in crime since the initiative was launched. Similar plaudits met the award for the Team category in the Young Citizen of the Year Award run by the Barking and Dagenham Post, Barking and Dagenham Council and the Police's Community Involvement Unit.

### *From Offending to Employment (FOTE)*

This initiative was launched as an element of a wider Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) programme with the intention of bringing about a 'sustained reduction in the levels of crime and fear of crime, primarily in the London Boroughs of Newham and Waltham Forest' but also extending into Redbridge, Barking and Dagenham and Havering. This was to be achieved through the provision of education, training and employment (ETE) opportunities, and other activities designed to divert offenders and those at risk from crime and other anti social behaviour, into mainstream training and employment.

As part of the initiative a vocational training package was developed which was targeted at 'socially excluded' groups from across North East London, including adults on probation orders; clients recovering from substance misuse referred from voluntary and statutory drug agencies; young people (aged from fourteen up) who have come into contact with the criminal justice system and/or social services; and young people referred to crime diversion initiatives by FOTE in the North East London area.

<sup>19</sup> LBBD (2001) Barking & Dagenham Audit of Crime & Disorder, Barking & Dagenham Community Safety Team

<sup>20</sup> Crime Concern (2000) Youth Works Plus, Woodberry Down Estate: crime and Disorder Profile Report, Crime Concern

<sup>21</sup> [www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk](http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk)

<sup>22</sup> Crime Concern (2000) Youth Works Plus, Woodberry Down Estate: Crime and Disorder Profile Report, Crime Concern, p.10

The overall aim for the project was to engage young adults caught up in the criminal justice system by organising football coaching sessions, small-sided games and matches. From this initial interest it was anticipated that individuals would enrol on courses linked to football and sport run by staff at LOCSP. These individuals were most likely to become involved with the Eastside team which had emerged out of a Drug Challenge Fund project which represented one of LOCSP's first forays into issue-based work back in 1995, when the organisation began working with clients referred from local drug agencies and probation services.

## On the Gazza

*Driving through the de-industrialising urban sprawl of East London towards Barking in Grant's football laden Ford Galaxy the driver is in familiar pose, calmly chastising more aggressive fellow crawlers on the overflowing roads "Who are these people, Tim. I ask ya. Am I drivin' a Honda Civic 'ere?" as he outmanoeuvres a black BMW with tinted windscreens to secure a place on the north circular, halting his adversary in his tracks, his calmness eliding with readiness for confrontation. Dressed casually in his office kit of canvass jeans, check shirt and Timberland's Grant is the sort of guy you know can look after himself but who you'd also find it hard not to get along with. A stoic master of deprecating London patter which names no victim but leaves its audience on its toes, matching a solid physical presence that belongs to his genes rather than a gym. He is taking me to the Gascoigne, the notorious sprawling housing estate in Barking where LOCSP has been running estate based sports activities since the summer of 2000. To the funders and those working within the arenas of urban regeneration and social exclusion the work goes under the banner of Positive Futures. To those on the estate, it's just an amateur football team, the Gascoigne Estate Crew.*

*Whilst physically melting into the concrete jungle that constitutes this part of London, the Gascoigne's 'problems' are announced to residents and would be interlopers by the large street sign at the gated opening to St Margaret's which reads 'The Metropolitan Police working in partnership with the local community to create a safer environment'. To the network of welfare, regeneration and crime partnerships targeting the estate, the banner gives a new presence to their work, masking another reality beyond the slogans.*

*On the inside of this 'gated community', where the barriers are tactically deployed to keep residents in rather than trespassers out, there is little sign of the partnership which has become part of the everyday vernacular of contemporary social policy. The Baseline youth project, victim of the same problems it is their to curtail, is protected by steel doors and a secure access system that you might more readily expect at a nightclub entrance guarded by bouncers, whilst shirt sleeved police officers do the approaching, prompting the suspicion of younger residents.*

*As we drive past the boarded up Abbey Arms on Ripple Rd, which neighbours the estate, Grant comments:*

*'The first night I came down 'ere there was a guy lying on the floor outside that pub dead. Just lyin' there dead, on the pavement.'*

*This was no attempt at shock treatment, no search for respect, for Grant and I have known each other and this world for many years, but it did set the context for Grant's first ventures onto the estate when he was as unknown as any other visitor.*

*It occurred to me that back then, wandering around in his club tracksuit, carrying a bag of balls, the coach must have struck passers-by as looking somewhat out of place. The estate is often crowded with strollers; many of them seem to have little immediate purpose apart from passing the time, bumping into friends and standing to talk for a while. Young mothers with pushchairs walk from one side of the estate to the other and then back again without venturing out. Groups of young wannabe's huddle together outside the parade of shops. Unknown faces inevitably prompt interest here and curiosity gradually got the better of some of the youngsters as they approached the man in the tracksuit to ask what he was doing. As Grant recalls*

*'I'd just been going down there for a few nights and wandered round, I saw there was a hard play area that had seen better days, but you could use it. The kids started askin' who I was and I just asked them if they were interested in football and dished out a few leaflets. I told them I'd be there on Monday night, and they were like, 'Yeah, yeah, all right' and I knew they were thinking I'd be gone before anything got going but there were a dozen or so there the next Monday and we started to suss each other out and then we just kept going, rain or shine, Mondays, Wednesdays, weekends.'*



*Since then, in the face of Grant's relentless commitment, consistency and organisational thoroughness, over 200 youngsters have become involved in the project, several of whom are now employed as sessional coaches and project workers themselves and whose work he had come to monitor on this evening.*

*His ability to connect with the young people here relates to an intuitive understanding of how the multiple discourses on crime and exclusion, which dissolve the easy distinctions between victim, offender and consumer, are woven into the very fabric of daily life.*

*As we parked up and wondered over to the hard court play area running alongside St Margaret's, Grant assumed the role of interpreter, commenting*

*'See this kid he'll have your watch off you in a moment. He's an Old Bailey trial waiting to happen. He'll be a one-man TV programme in ten years' before provocatively shouting out*

*'Oi ginger!' as the kid mucked about on the far side of the court. A ten year old crop haired, bare chested urchin looked up defiantly before recognising his mentor and crying out 'Grant!' and running over, jumping up and hugging him as though he were a returning much missed father. Other kids saunter over and the banter flows as those unfamiliar with 'Bob's' mate conduct their own surveillance, testing out the 'outsider'. The impossibility of a fixed identity in the midst of London's contemporary diversity enabling this white, fair haired 1960s son of an East End council estate to play with his audience and their racial stereotypes, telling them he's Albanian.*

*'You're not Albanian' dismisses one kissing his teeth.*

*Smirkingly indignant 'Grant' proclaims*

*'I am. What is this, customs? You want my passport? I'm tellin' ya I'm Albanian'.*

*Always alert he spots one of his players. A 'face' on the estate who's status he knows will settle the score and provide an opportunity to embellish.*

*'You know 'Saz'?'*

*'Yeah'*

*'Albanian yeah? 'E's my bruver'.*

*Unconvinced but sufficiently unsure, the young pretender moves on.*

*'Why you here?'*

*'I'm scouting. Come to see you.'*

*They turn back to the kick about that has been going on in advance of the training session whilst we lean against the perimeter of the brick and wire enclosure. The youngsters are soon putting on a performance, half an eye on the game, half an eye on the shadowy, uncertain possibility that Grant represents. 'Bob' has climbed on top of the steel portakabin that doubles as a storeroom to which any pretence of security has long since been abandoned until Grant, unimpressed, calls him down. Soon he's back alongside us sharing tales, which invert the authority of his local school's rules*

*'When d'you break up for summer?'*

*'I've finished. Bin excluded'*

*'Why were you excluded?'*

*'Didn't do my work innit'*

*'Why not?'*

*'Cos then you get excluded and you don't 'ave to do no work'*

*'Bob' jumps around like a circus act without a trapeze, constantly fiddling with Grant's watch and lifting his keys.*

*'What car d'you drive Grant? Is that your Merc?'*

*'I'm not telling you what car I drive. It'll be gone in 2 minutes'*

*'Is it the Beamer. I won't nick it. I just wanna sit in it. Go on let's 'ave a drive'*

*In a flash they all run off up the street after someone said something about what someone else had said in the excited manner of any group of children on a summers evening. We took our cue to go off for a stroll ourselves and when we return 'Bob', 'Dean' and their mates were back hanging out beside the play area with 'Kels' who now works for the organisation and leads many of the sessions on the estate and who was dressed for action in shorts and club T-shirt but was making no move to get things going in the face of the indifference generated by the warm summer's evening sunshine. The organisational intensity of Grant's early interventions having now given way to 'Kels's' 'anti-structure' approach as he sits chatting with some of the 'kids' while his seventeen year old coaching assistant 'Paulo' is said to be cruising the estate on a Suzuki 750 motorbike. Grant is not showing it yet but you know he'll be making sure things are back on track next week.*

*As we join them, 'Bob' claims to have just punched a boy who had a knife at the other end of the estate in the recent spat whilst his mate 'Dean' plays down his pretence as he wheels around on his mountain bike.*

*'E's just actin' tough innit. We just chased 'em.'*

*The brashness subsides as Grant teases him*

*'Ere's the Old Bill 'Bob'. Come to get ya'*

*As three uniformed officers wonder towards us 'Bob' shiftily moves to sit between 'Kels' and 'Frank', who also helps out with the coaching, prompting interest in 'Kels's' T-shirt and the ball he is bouncing.*

*''Ave you goh' any more of 'em? Can I 'ave one?'*

*Grant is prompted into tried and trusted wheeler-dealer mode, playing to the embryonic ducker and diver sensibilities of his audience.*

*'I'll tell you what'. You be good 'till November, don't get excluded 'till November and Ill get you a T-shirt and a ball'.*

*'Till November, that's ages'*

*'It's the summer holidays now isn't it, so you've only got to manage September and October.'*

*'Then you'll give me one of those T-shirts and a ball?'*

*'Stay in school 'till November'.*

*'Yessss'*

*'Be good for your teachers, yeah'. He knows that in all likelihood he won't, but you've got to try, give everyone a chance rather than write them off.*

*Meanwhile Grant teases 'Frank' about his fake 'Beckham' earrings and plays with notions of sexuality without recourse to homophobia in this playground of masculine performance. Onlookers fail to emulate the precision of his jousting, crying dismissively*

*'Pussy'*

*But 'Frank' passes the test, unperturbed and dressed immaculately in his Evisu jeans and designer trainers he responds incongruously*

*'I'm blingin' man, innit', as 'Reuben', similarly attired, walks past, acknowledging Grant and stopping to chat.*

*'You not playing football?'*

*'No'*

*'Who's your mate?' (who Grant has not met before) 'Nice trainers. How d'you afford them? You working, yeah?'*

*He responds proudly*

*'Yeah'*

*'Where you working?'*

*Unhesitatingly, encouraged and empowered by Grant's compliments he responds*

*'McDonalds.'*

*'Come down next Monday if you wanna play football, yeah. Nice shoes fella.'*

*As we go to move on Grant is looking out for 'Paulo', who had been riding up and down the estate at speed, the same 'Paulo' who at the age of fifteen had once screeched past him at 110mph whilst wearing no helmet on the north circular in order that he would not be late for a training session. Now seventeen he was driving his brother's bike, who is sixteen and unlicensed to ride it, but as Grant commented*

*'At least he's got a helmet on now.'*

*'Bob' takes on the role of PR officer trying to get the local celebrity to stop a few times as 'Paulo', recently returned from a spell playing as a trainee with Bristol Rovers football club, ignores him. Grant drives past and calls out, just once*

*'PAULO'*

*Instantly glancing round, sapped of his invulnerability, the driver stops and turns his bike tentatively, as 'Bob' tries to talk his way into the car, before 'Paulo' anticipates Grant's concerns, proffering that*

*'It's legal'*

*'Yeah, yeah but what about you. Are you legal?' Teasing him 'the police are up there you know'*

*'Are they?' queries the now concerned star performer.*

*Reserving judgement for now, Grant, eager to ensure his continued participation in the coaching sessions which he would normally help to run and which have moderated his excesses and run-ins for the past two years, tells his attentive protégé*

*'Turn up next Monday. You must be there. I don't care if no one's there and there's no coaching going on. You must be there', be.*

*We drive off thinking of 'Paulo' as we pass the exit placard declaring 'Gascoigne estate welcomes careful drivers'.*

In the midst of the banality of these everyday encounters one might question the Youth Justice Board's dissemination of the organisation's work on the Gascoigne as an example of best practice amongst interventions with young people at risk of offending. Why is it the case that so many social inclusion professionals regard Grant's forays on to the estate as being so revolutionary? Is it not slightly perplexing that those people who are supposedly responsible for regenerating the excluded wastelands of the urban metropolis believe those very same areas are out of bounds; dangerous places where other people live and work? When considering the plethora of government and community organisations who state their purpose as positive intervention in the lives of the marginalised and at risk, why is it that a small community football programme can seemingly enter into the lives of these people in a way that very few of the others can claim to do, bridging the rapidly widening chasm that separates the world of the 'excluded' from those of the 'included'?

### From top to bottom: Re-ordering community sports work

Conventionally, sport in both its elite and mass participant versions has been organised according to much more highly structured and inflexible models of provision than those associated with LOCSP's estate based interventions. Even within the sphere of community sport the principles of direct service or top down delivery have defined the approach of both public and voluntary sector providers, as the community worker takes on duties and functions, which give a direct service to the public. According to this scheme of things, ultimately, it is the delivery agency that has the final say, control and power. This approach has been criticised by some proponents for being paternalistic, since it depends on the interpretation of politicians and public service officers as to what constitutes a suitable case for action.

By contrast the community development approach is seen by Glen<sup>23</sup> to entail 3 main elements:

- Community definition of its own needs and making provision for those needs;
- The fostering of creative and co-operative networks of people and groups in communities;
- Practitioners operating in a non-directive way.

In Baldry's terms, adapting the conceptualisation of community arts projects, the terms "animation" and "animateur" are significant in that:

Community [sport and recreation practitioners] are distinguishable not by the techniques they use...but by their attitudes towards the place of their activities in the life of society. The primary concern is the impact on a community and their relation with it: by assisting those with whom they make contact to become more aware of their situation and of their own creative powers, and providing them with the facilities they need to make use of their abilities, they hope to widen and deepen the sensitivities of the community in which they work and so to enrich its existence. To a varying degree, they see this as a means of change, whether psychological, social or political, within the community.<sup>24</sup>

This approach also recognises people's own capacities to 'develop community' through self-help. 'At the most basic level, there is a strong belief that the human resources necessary for change and development are available in the community itself – the aim of the community worker is to release these resources'.<sup>25</sup> Community development is concerned with meeting the needs of the community, through the community, in non-directive ways.

Community sport and recreation is an alternative to mainstream forms of sport and leisure provision, which recognises the failure of sport to reach all or most people. It is de-centralised and is a devolved form of sports participation. It has a focus on community development, which seeks to repair the destruction of traditional working class communities. It also lends itself to cohesion and community spirit and involves participative and consultative practices about policies affecting people's everyday lives. Community sport and recreation is integrated with other service provision. It looks for an efficient use of resources and service delivery and tends to have a holistic view of needs. In this way community sport and recreation can be seen as a means of bringing about political, social and psychological change.

<sup>23</sup> Glen, A. (1993) 'Methods and Themes in Community Practice' in H. Butcher et al Community and Public Policy. London: Pluto Press, p.24

<sup>24</sup> Baldry, H. C (1976) in Howarth, J et al (eds.) Leisure and the Community. LSA

<sup>25</sup> Taylor, M. et al (1976) Principles and Practice of Community Work in a British Town. CPF

In the 1980's Hoggett and Hambleton<sup>26</sup> looked at the decentralisation and democratisation of public services. Given that traditional methods of sport and leisure provision i.e. facility based, have failed to attract significant numbers from disadvantaged groups, community sport and recreation is seen as a means of addressing this problem. Ahead of their time, they argued that the development of a more responsive form of public service is now required to cater for the differentiated consumer. Differentiated consumers are in contrast to universal consumers and are therefore not blindly and automatically regarded as male, white, able-bodied, heterosexual breadwinners.

Nevertheless there are few cases of community sport practice that overtly combine education and recreation goals. Community sport initiatives are often limited, piecemeal and delivered in top-down ways meaning that they have little significance for most local people. Until recently they have gained little if any status as legitimate ways forward for sport and recreation whilst sport itself has not easily incorporated community ways of working, in the face of 'market' led alternatives. In Butcher's terms:

Community practice constitutes part of a distinctive, yet relatively undeveloped approach to decision-making and service-delivery within a range of UK public services. The approach – of which community sport, recreation, and leisure is part – is fairly new, and in many ways represents an alternative to, and embraces a critique of, more orthodox and well established approaches to policy and service provision within the public sector.<sup>27</sup>

In this context Haywood<sup>28</sup> has argued that community sport is sometimes used as 'a fashionable label with virtually no recognition that a particular set of practices and values is implied'. Plant's<sup>29</sup> suggestion that 'community' is merely a 'spray on' term is pertinent in this regard. Critics might justifiably argue that the term 'community' is used 'purely to lend legitimacy and positive feelings, credence and acceptability' to mainstream sports provision, which is essentially still bureaucratically organised and professionally and politically controlled.

It is in the space between these arbitrary classifications, between mainstream and community approaches, that the work of Grant and his colleagues at LOCSP finds its niche. In the development of their programme the key workers have consistently attempted to develop projects which will, in their eyes, make their work more relevant to the 'communities' that they see themselves as serving as well as attracting the funding to secure their future operations. The move on to the Gascoigne and Woodberry Down estates was a consequence of a decision that their work should be taken to the very core of what was more widely perceived as the rotten heart of social exclusion.

Whilst, through their surveillance, the more authoritarian agents of the state, such as Youth Offending Teams and Probation Officers, had identified the 'targets', the fifty young people 'most at risk of offending', on each of the estates earmarked by the Positive Futures programme, the organisation's coaches had their own approach. Their capacity to connect with the 'target' group relating to their own biographies, social outlook and interpretive market savvy as well as their commitment to helping those they engage with to realise their potential.

In the domain of sport and community development work, a coach who is linked to a professional football club has the kind of credibility that a local authority sports development worker would die for. But professional football club coaches do not generally wander onto the Gascoigne or Woodberry Down. Lower league football club's do not carry the same appeal as those from the 'Premiership' but LOCSP's association with Leyton Orient still provides a sense of authenticity which can buy an introduction, an opportunity to engage. But beyond that introduction the capacity to achieve the aspirational goals that the organisation sets itself is reliant upon an empathy with the participants, which marks the work apart from the more repressive, hierarchical conventions of traditional sports provision.

### Key issues

LOCSP organise sessions on and around their target estates on an almost daily basis generally with between twenty and forty participants at each session. In the region of 400 to 500 contacts are made each week. It is in the space between the arbitrary classifications - mainstream and community approaches - that the work of LOCSP finds its niche

<sup>26</sup> Hoggett, P. and Hambleton, R. (1987) *Decentralisation and Democracy*. Bristol, Advanced School of Urban Studies.

<sup>27</sup> Butcher, H. (ed) (1993) *Community and public policy*, London: Pluto Press, p.3

<sup>28</sup> Haywood, L. (ed.) (1994) *Community Leisure and Recreation: Theory and Practice*. Oxford, Butterworth-Heinemann, p.77

<sup>29</sup> Plant (1974) *Community and ideology: an essay in applied social philosophy*, London: Routledge

### 'You can take the boy out of the East End but you can't take the East End out of the boy': Cultural capital, authenticity and the community sports worker

The late French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu argued that all humans inherit dispositions to act in certain ways. In this sense they possess an inherited concept of society, which they then modify, according to their own specific local conditions and experiences. Referring to his research on Kabyle culture in Algeria he pointed out that:

By the very reason of the intensity of communal sentiments, the rules on which the community is based do not need to be made to appear as imperatives. They permeate the living reality of manners and customs.<sup>30</sup>

For Bourdieu, the ability to absorb appropriate actions is the key for individuals to be at ease with themselves and others. As such, within sport, being a competent social actor and having a mastery over social practices involves a 'feel for the game', which requires the internalisation of social mores by an individual. Bourdieu's notion of 'habitus' then is an internalised schema that structures but does not determine individual actions, thoughts and feelings and which is expressed or embodied in people's physical and verbal deportment. It is through this notion of habitus that we see the social world and the position of others and ourselves in it as unexceptional.

Bourdieu also offers a view of social relations, which supposes that individuals and groups artificially construct differences as part of their position-taking. The cultures of individuals and groups are the tokens by which they distinguish themselves from others in order to establish their own position. Consideration of this relationship between situation and position leads us to an understanding of Bourdieu's concept of 'cultural capital' and the point that our cultural 'choices' are strategically guided by our habitus, a kind of 'second nature' associated with our biography.

Bourdieu used the concept of 'capital' as developed in economic theory and applied it to culture. As such our social positions are seen to be modified by our cultural tastes in as much as the cultural system assigns more value to some tastes than others. Thus the habitus encompasses orientations towards the aesthetics and uses of the body and physical activity which are class specific such that we must see 'society written into the body, into the biological individual'<sup>31</sup>:

The practical affirmation of an inevitable difference...There is no accounting for tastes...each taste feels itself to be natural – and so it is, being a habitus – which amounts to rejecting others as unnatural and therefore vicious.<sup>32</sup>

The usefulness of these concepts here relates to the point that the ability of the LOCSP coaches and development workers to engage with the young residents of the Gascoigne and Woodberry Down estates relates to their own biographies and embodied selves and the degree to which they are acknowledged and valued in these locales. In this regard Grant is the embodiment of what in a different context Garry Robson has called 'Millwallism'<sup>33</sup>, his own biography intrudes throughout, providing an intuitive knowing of the condition of those he works with. Constantly reading the multitude of clashing texts presented in front of him, picking up on the nuances of individual style and quick with a comeback Grant is at ease in a way that makes those he works with comfortable. When 'Bob' tells of his sister smoking indoors, now is not the time to probe further whether he means cigarettes, spliffs or crack cocaine. The police are not tipped off about 'Paulo's' unorthodox means of arriving at training on time. 'Terry's' casual tale of a fight with 'Bob's' Dad over a mattress which flew out of a window too quickly is a source of amusement rather than a reason to discourage him from doing some summer coaching. Experiences are shared, forming the basis of lasting relationships through which guidance is sought and Grant's approval is prized. Since in his terms:

it's about having the right people out there, week in, week out, building those relationships with the kids. Without that, it doesn't matter how much money you throw at it, or how good your intentions are, it just won't work....

<sup>30</sup> Bourdieu, P. (1962) *The Algerians*, Boston, MA: Beacon Press, p.23-4

<sup>31</sup> Bourdieu, P. (1978) *Sport and social class*, *Social Science Information*, vol. XVIII, 6, p.821

<sup>32</sup> Bourdieu, P. (1980) 'Aristocracy of culture', *Media, Culture and Society*, vol.II, 3, p.253

<sup>33</sup> Robson, G. (2000) 'No one likes us, we don't care': *The myth and reality of Millwall Fandom*, Oxford: Berg

Whilst having the right credentials, talking the talk, walking the walk are vital elements of the successful community sports worker's tool kit, it is not sufficient to just be 'one of the lads'. There is a requirement to offer something more, to stand out from the crowd; to be inspirational without breaking with the world that is being engaged. Whether that is in terms of a worldliness gleaned from an educational setting, through work experience or life history, there must be a sparkle and a confidence backed up by action. The point was well illustrated at Stansted airport as a squad of players from the two estates gathered for a trip to Berlin to play Union Berlin's academy side. The trip had been organised by LOCSP and was led by 'Sol':

*Sports teams in airports have a certain look about them that sets them apart from the usual terminal crowd of businessmen, families, couples, and friends. Enormous kit bags, a single-sex group of a certain size, an awkward sense of self-importance. 'Here we are, a team, on a mission, off to compete'.*

*'Ad', who had set up the trip, instructed us all to wear jackets and ties. This was official business, LOCSP on tour. Jackets and ties are not normal requirements on LOCSP outings. There are no club blazers and jackets and ties don't come naturally to the LOCSP players or staff whether on the estate, in college, at the office, or on a night out.*

*As such most of the players had opted for the Windsor Knot of the kind to be seen adorning Premier League stars in post match interviews. Street-smart sensibilities informed their choices of designer labelled clothes; Armani, Dolce and Gabbana, Stone Island, Evisu. The day demanded the squad to be smart in a conventional manner that was not normally expected of them, but in adapting to these demands the players relied on their own local rules of what it is to be 'cool' in their everyday lives.*

*'Sol' wore a suit with an open-necked shirt.*

*'I don't do ties' he proclaimed.*

*It was an expensive suit, it was up-to-the minute fashion, he looked smart, he looked 'cool'.*

*By contrast 'Ad' doesn't do designer labels, he knows about them but he thinks they are for fashion-victims, over-priced garments for the gullible. He was wearing a retro 1960's tie that was too thin for the Windsor knot. Premier League superstars do not influence 'Ad's' sartorial sensibilities.*

*The players understand 'Sol'; they aspire to be like him in so many ways. He makes them laugh, he has an understated power and authority which is immediately impressive, he is of them but he and his cultural capital have matured far beyond them. He talks their talk with ease, he understands them, but he talks above their talk with a certain worldliness that they eagerly consume.*

*The players don't really understand 'Ad'. He isn't one of them. His encyclopaedic knowledge of 60's and 70's music doesn't lend itself to debates about East Coast and West Coast, urban house, 50cent.*

*Both 'Sol' and 'Ad' are dressed smartly. 'Sol' is regarded by the players as 'cool', 'Ad' isn't. 'Ad' has followed the dress code rules of the day, 'Sol' hasn't.*

'Sol's' independence and self-confidence, a defiance of that which he sees as unnecessary alongside an unswerving commitment to the LOCSP cause and meticulous attention to doing things 'properly', is regarded as a strength by the players, resonating as it does with their own cultural values and commitments. Whilst 'Ad's' allegiance to the LOCSP cause is equally unswerving, the players appreciate, understand, and relate to 'Sol's' in a fundamentally different way. It is this distinction, which is what defines their abilities to do their respective jobs, illustrating the blend of skills, which are required to make things work.

### Key issues

The ability of the LOCSP workers to engage with the young residents of the Gascoigne and Woodberry Down estates relates to their own biographies and the degree to which they are acknowledged and valued in these locales. They also need to offer something more, to stand out from the crowd; to be inspirational without breaking with their roots.

## Involvement and detachment: Cultural intermediaries, ‘cool’ distance and respect

It is in such contexts that we might better begin to understand the supposed success of LOCSP. What the Programme achieves is direct interpersonal contact with the outsiders in a way that other agencies, and particularly conventional sports agencies, do not. To a very large extent it is this in itself which constitutes success, the quantifiable targets laid down by funding bodies have to be met, but it is in the nature of the work - the relations formed, the level of access achieved - where the battle for legitimacy and status is largely won. LOCSP straddles two increasingly different worlds, it acts as interpreter for each. A skill that is increasingly significant at a time when the inhabitants at either end of the inclusion/exclusion spectrum are losing the old skills of communication, advocacy and negotiation.

In this way, rather than developing sporting talent per se (although this is a significant element of LOCSP's work) the success of the organisation lies in its position as a ‘cultural intermediary’. This concept has been most readily applied by Bourdieu<sup>34</sup> and by Featherstone<sup>35</sup> as a way of understanding the emergence of a ‘new middle class’ which has helped to collapse some of the old distinctions between ‘popular’ and ‘high’ culture and opened the possibility for a broadening of access to an intellectual and artistic way of life. We use the term here in relation to a quite different cultural axis between the socially ‘excluded’ and the ‘included’. It is illustrative of our contention that LOCSP has been able to bridge what is otherwise perceived as an ever-widening gap between the excluded minority and the included majority through its appeal as somehow legitimate and authentic to individuals, groups and agencies on either side of this discursive divide.

Whilst ‘from above’ such interventions are regarded as innovative, offering an effective and ‘fresh’ approach to tackling the criminogenic consequences of exclusion, the constituencies they ‘deal with’ are seen to appreciate and welcome the ‘intervention’ because it is perceived and experienced as being of a non-interfering and non-threatening variety. The coaches are seen in different ways to many of the other agents of social control such as teachers, police officers, probation officers and youth workers. They are regarded as opening up possibilities, providing guidance and demystifying mainstream society rather than asserting some kind of repressive authority. The credibility of a sports background coupled with an empathy for the condition of those they work with has encouraged many young people on the estates to become qualified as coaches themselves, going on to work with LOCSP and other community schemes whilst many more have been influenced to go back to school, on to college or into jobs. Others may have fallen by the wayside or been identified as having little hope of escaping a life peppered with incarceration but none are ignored, demeaned or denied access.

As such, all kinds of contingencies are at play across the panoply of social distinctions which mark the uncertain times in which we live as the organisation's work necessarily sets up clashes and discomforts the easy routines of a more parochial existence in its efforts to make new opportunities available to participants. Biding time, waiting for the moment and using life as an educational tool characterises the approach as with the case of ‘Jay’, the star of Eastside and former captain of the Woodberry Downers who now has aspirations towards working for the organisation and emulating the standards set by his mentor, ‘Sol’. As yet ‘Jay’ is somewhat short of developing the professional and life skills to take on that role and was recently in court following a fight where the magistrate told him in no uncertain terms that if he came before the courts again he would be sent to prison. ‘Sol’ vouched for his character and potential despite his knowledge that he was already ‘known’ to the police because he genuinely believes that ‘Jay’ has a future working in this field. He believes in ‘Jay’. He likes him: “he’s a nice lad, they’re all nice lads”.

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<sup>34</sup> Bourdieu, P. (1984) *Distinction: A social critique of judgement and taste*, London: Routledge

<sup>35</sup> Featherstone, M. (1991) *Consumer Culture & Postmodernism*, Nottingham: TCS



Whilst in the footballing context 'Sol' is unforgiving of 'Jay's' excesses and easy involvement in confrontations and fights, which has borne fruit in terms of a moderation of his behaviour in recent months he does not conceive his role as moral guardian to the players. He is non-judgemental about stories of off the field 'deviance' that filter into the dressing room. But 'distance' is always entwined with involvement and beyond his role as a football coach 'Sol' became a central figure in 'Jay's' life. When a casual girlfriend fell pregnant and Jay felt a sense of responsibility but did not believe that the relationship had a future, he turned to 'Sol' for advice on how he should proceed, apparently demonstrating the extent to which the player had trust for him. Indeed 'Jay' has even reflected that:

'Sol' is like a Dad to me. I don't know about everyone else, but to me, because me and 'Sol' like we phone each other...just chatting, not only football, something in general want to know. So 'Sol's' like a Dad I never had in this country you know. That's how it feels to me. He just knows the right things to say to you.

'Sol's' approach in such situations is to outline the options as he sees them rather than to impose 'solutions'.

In another context, back on the trip to Berlin where professional pride and the image of the organisation are at stake, more direct intervention is required:

*We touch down in Berlin and taxi to the 'arrivals' lounge. Moving through passport control, a couple of us don't. 'Jay' and 'Nile' have been pulled to one side by the middle-aged (white) immigration officer. He questions the validity of their travel documents. He seems at a genuine loss as to why anybody would reason that it was ok to travel on anything less than a standard issue EC passport.*

*'It's an identity card, it's alright y'know, it's alright y'know.'*

*He isn't convinced, but at the same time he doesn't seem in anyway hostile – it just seems that he is not used to this kind of thing.*

*His shoulders slump and his neck gives way to allow his head to sink down to a closer examination of the flimsy pieces of paper. With all the other passengers having passed through the immigration checkpoints the undecided gatekeeper was joined by curious colleagues. They huddled around our pair and tried to make sense of the frayed paperwork.*

*'What is this, it looks like it could be made on a photo-copier.'*

*When they first got stopped I immediately thought yeah, yeah – black people and immigration officers. But I'm looking at it now and I'm not sensing any great hostility, just a 'that's not the way you do it'.*

*'So are these your friends, the football team?'*

*We are bunched up on the other side of the cabin that for this airport divides Germany and no-mans-land (included/excluded – welcome/verboten). It's a mixture of talk:*

*'Why we getting kept up? (trans. I'm exasperated – I've got somewhere to go)*

*'Jay' give us your Euros' (trans. You're not getting in – taking the piss)*

*'Why us, something wrong the way we witness?' (trans. collective sense of injustice located in class/ racial distinctions).*

*'Sol' steps in.*

*'Yeah, I know ....yeah, no, no, it's fine. No it's all ok. They are travelling with us... no, no...we are leaving tomorrow...No, no this is the rest of the team... yeah we're being picked up by the representatives of the other team...Yeah that's right, tomorrow. I can understand it – they look like undesirables don't they (and everyone on our side of the divide is laughing, but not loudly because they can see 'Sol' is winning – they want him to win) Yeah course, brilliant, that's fantastic. We'll see you tomorrow'.*

*The immigration officers had come to some kind of compromise, they smiled and gesticulated with hands outstretched*

*'That's the best we can do for you –but it's good enough - you get to stay'.*

*One of the officers goes off to photocopy the identity cards; the others smile at the rest of us who are already on the right side of Germany. 'Jay' and 'Nile' shuffle with a nervous anticipation, they know that it is only a question of time now, but they want it to be sooner rather than later.*

*'When you come back tomorrow you tell us this and we check, yes?'*

*They wish us luck in the match and wave 'Jay', 'Nile' and 'Sol' through.*

*'It's not funny y'know'. 'Jay' says.*

*He doesn't think it's funny; he puts his shoulders up as the rest of the team try to slap, squeeze and poke.*

*'Saw a bad man coming through innit'.*

*The rest of them are laughing, but there is an unmistakable sense of relief that everything has been sorted out and that the team has passed through into Germany proper intact.*

*As we go through customs and into the hall holding waiting relatives, friends and drivers holding placards identifying their fares, 'Ad' strides purposefully and enthusiastically to a fit-looking and well tanned man wearing a blazer and tie.*

*We quickly learn that this is Henry Hauseler, the director of the youth academy at FC Union. He greets us warmly and appears genuinely delighted that we have arrived. The players look a little awkward at each having to take their turn to greet their host, but at the same time they are keen to get this right.*

*Nobody seems to be exactly sure how Henry fits into all of this but his presence gives everybody an impression that he is somehow important and somebody who needs to be treated with respect. The subdued and slightly forced politeness contrasts with the raucous banter aimed at 'Jay' only minutes before.*

*The lads are learning how to behave.*

In this sense we can borrow from Sennett's<sup>36</sup> critique of the lack of mutual respect which otherwise tends to pervade the provision of services to those who are forced to abide by or are dependent upon bureaucratic welfare organisations and their representatives. He presents what is essentially an argument for the performativity or stylistic presentation of 'respect' in a world characterised by fleeting social relationships and pervaded by inequality, where gaining respect becomes a matter of composing the appropriate kind of 'performance'. Success here is measured not by mere acts or gestures but by the extent to which the performance embodies what it takes to generate respect between two communities of people who do not know and do not really want to know the full extent of each other's experience. Here then, in maintaining a 'cool' distance, 'respect' and authority are based upon an understanding of the futility of efforts to impose it by putting participants in their 'place' in the manner of the more traditional authoritarian sports leader. In our times, gaining respect has become a matter of being accepted by the Other as 'cool', as Sennett himself puts it: paying respect to the Otherness of others.

### Key issues

What LOCSP achieves is direct interpersonal contact with the outsiders in a way in which other agencies, and particularly conventional sports agencies, do not. The success of the organisation lies in its position as a 'cultural intermediary'. In maintaining a 'cool' distance, 'respect' and authority are based upon an understanding of the futility of any efforts to impose it by putting participants in their 'place'.

### Poachers and gamekeepers: Sporting gateways

One of the key markers of success for LOCSP and for the estate based work in particular has been the transition from participant to coach of many of the young men that the estate based interventions have engaged. Some of these transitions have proved more successful than others.

*... 'Tone' was one of those people who, once met, was never forgotten. He had an energy that took over any situation. You would describe him to those who had not had the pleasure as, 'a character'. 'Tone's' record for burglary, drug abuse and chunks of life wasted in prison spoke for itself. 'Tone's' potential for 'success' seemed apparent in the immediacy of his joining the 'deep-enders'. He was loud and confident; the rest of the team loved him. Throughout games and coaching sessions he would harry, cajole, empathise, and encourage. He was completely bald and five foot nothing, he laughed about this and let everybody in the team know that it was ok to do the same. 'Tone' would quite often win games by himself. 'Tone' was quite something.*

*LOCSP began to employ him as a sessional coach. He was regarded as the epitome of 'success'. Clutching clichés, some of us began to talk of 'poacher turned game-keeper'. However, 'Tone's' shining light quickly began to fade. The initial euphoria, which celebrated his down-to-earth, but nevertheless inspiring, rapport with the 'kids', was replaced by a sense of unease. 'Tone' became increasingly unreliable. If he was late, or if he missed a coaching session, he would offer stories and excuses even wider than his persona. When he was first approached to work with the Programme he was insistent that he did not want paying.*

*'I want to do it for the lads so they don't end up like me – like a lemon'.*

*The last few times that I saw 'Tone' the circumstances were similar. He would march into the office and demand money. He claimed for hours for which he had never been contracted to work (for which he had not worked), for sessions, which he had failed to deliver. Alternatively he would ask for an advance on his wages, explaining that the gas and the electricity meters both needed feeding and that his elderly mother was emaciated and in desperate need of bread. He became increasingly volatile, he chased an opposition player from the pitch brandishing a weapon and threatening unspeakable violence. LOCSP terminated 'Tone's' contract. He had some sense that he had been unfairly treated, that he was owed compensation. When he was not shouting and being bitter he said that he was sorry, that he knew he had 'fucked-up'. After a time 'Tone' was no longer there. Other players in the 'deep-enders' said that they had heard, but could not say for sure, that he had gone back to prison.*

<sup>36</sup> Sennett, R. (2002) *Respect: The formation of character in an age of inequality*, London: Penguin

'Tone's' fall from grace was a disappointment, a 'failure'. Those LOCSP staff most involved with the newly unfolding social exclusion projects were beginning to conjure up an image of what a successful 'client' might look like or do and, for a period, 'Tone' had appeared to fit the bill. 'Success', was now beginning to be thought of as being evidenced by incorporating those who had already been redeemed by sporting interventions into their further development and provision. In many ways we should consider 'Tone's' story as somewhat tragic, a man whose history prior to coming into contact with LOCSP was remarkable largely in terms of its futility and nihilistic tendencies. His subsequent association with LOCSP suggested the possibility of a 'fresh start'. More than that, he could salvage something from a hitherto 'wasted life' and put it to 'good' use. He had 'screwed up' before, but in the context of what had just been put before him this appeared to be as big a blunder as any previously made.

Yet those LOCSP staff that had been closest to 'Tone' never gave the appearance of being overly disturbed by his downfall. When he failed to 'show' at a coaching session he was cursed in the same way that any other colleague would be. It was never suggested that because 'Tone' had been given a 'chance', an opportunity that somebody with his antecedents would not normally receive, that he owed the organisation any added sense of responsibility or duty. Attempts were made to reason with him when he demanded money that he was not owed, but afterwards they would shrug and joke that 'Tone' had 'lost the plot'. 'Tone's' 'failure' was understood as being 'just one of those things', an occupational hazard.

Such stories are countered however by the succession of individuals who have and continue to enjoy a more positive, lasting relationship with LOCSP. 'Saz', a reasonably good footballer that plays up front for the GEC, provides one such example. The sport that he excels at is swimming. Before he scored goals for a team that represents a run-down, council estate blighted by the debilitating effects of drugs and crime he swam for Albania. It was while representing his country in a tournament in Italy that 'Saz' made the decision to come to England. Making his way across Europe clandestinely, 'Saz' arrived in this country and applied for asylum. His motivation for coming here was, from our understanding of what he has revealed, principally underscored by a young man's sense of adventure. He talks of Albania with a passion. He wants to return, possibly very shortly, it depends on whether he can gain a place at university in which case he will stay a bit longer. His reasons for being here confound those assumptions that usually attach to the asylum-seeker debate. His modest lifestyle and academic ambitions belie the 'economic migrant' tag so freely banded about in popular discourse.

(So far) 'Saz' is a 'success story'. Since joining the GEC he has become a regular feature of the team. He impressed the coach as a dedicated and responsible young man. He was encouraged to submit for the Junior Team Managers coaching qualification, which he duly passed. At this stage it was possible for LOCSP to employ 'Saz' on various projects. He has coached young people in a variety of settings, and now 'manages' a team of asylum seekers. The asylum seekers team is something, which is a great source of pride to 'Saz'. The team, for him, is much more than a collection of individuals brought together for the purpose of sport:

To begin with it was really bad, they were fighting all the time. We played against 'Kyle's' team (a team managed by another LOCSP coach) and they were fighting all the time. One of our players picked up the corner-flag pole to fight with. After we played some games I had to have a meeting with them. I said, 'look, they will throw us out. Then what will they think of us? We need to be better, so that our community will have pride in us.' They were better after that; I think they thought about what I was saying to them.

Later he went on to reflect how the very process of engaging with young people generates its own rewards, building self worth and confidence:

You actually think to yourself like...I actually helped that child you know. I actually...I can't believe...You know you actually think of it, you're actually proud of yourself. You're actually more proud of yourself than you're proud of the person you just helped.

As such he is committed in his conviction that:

If it had not been for the community programme and Grant I could have been in trouble. I could have had to find the wrong people to be with. I could have been in prison.

'Saz' is in no way unique. The work of LOCSP has produced countless success stories of this type. 'Tone's' 'failure' then appears to contrast sharply with the 'success' of 'Saz' and the many others like him, some of which

we reflect upon below. However the role that LOCSP has played in determining these apparent outcomes is still somewhat ambiguous. Indeed, we have to be open to the fact that neither of these ‘stories’ are resolved or complete in any way. To make any real sense of the work of LOCSP one has to be sensitive to the reality of the situation, to understand that rehabilitation is not to be discovered in the short-term. Redemption does not occur in the instant of a moment, the road to Damascus is not one that many of our players have trodden.

More than this, there is a need to begin to question the underlying assumptions that legitimate a strategy of sporting interventions. Pivotal to such a justification process is the belief that the reason why the clients are ‘at risk’ or ‘problematic’ is that they have somehow become detached from the mores, values and aspirations of mainstream society. On the contrary however, both ‘Tone’ and ‘Saz’ were eloquent and articulate in their belief that the world should be a more equitable place, that communities needed to be rebuilt, that the prevalence of crime reduced ‘ordinary’ people’s quality of life. ‘Saz’ and ‘Tone’ coached for LOCSP because it paid a wage, but to watch them go about their work gave an unmistakable impression that they took immense pride from the belief that they were engaged in an honourable project – that they were helping to improve things and implicitly that LOCSP inspired them. Their values and dreams were not spectacularly at odds with those of the ‘mainstream’, what was different was the ways in which they went about their lives.

However, blurred boundaries complicate the task of making simple distinctions between LOCSP’s successes and failures. The stories of ‘Jay’ and his contemporaries on the Woodberry Down estate illustrate the point well.

‘Jay’, who originally hails from Nigeria, now lives on the Woodberry Down estate where LOCSP began to work as part of a multi-agency partnership whose remit was to engage with those teenagers identified as being most at risk of offending. ‘Sol’, the LOCSP coach responsible for developing this particular project, recounts that ‘Jay’ was there from ‘day one’. He has rarely missed a coaching session, his dedication to the team cause, his pride in being made captain, are self-evident. ‘Jay’ passed his junior team management qualification and was given regular sessional coaching work with the organisation.

When seeking out the stories of success and failure that we might associate with the work of LOCSP ‘Jay’s’ story strikes us as immediately more ambiguous than ‘Saz’s’ or ‘Tone’s’. He has proven himself to be a conscientious worker, he attends college, he is a personable and popular young man. For all of this, however, ‘Jay’ continues to be engaged in ‘risky business’, a flirtation with danger with potentially long-term and damaging consequences. The complications of ‘Jay’s’ domestic life, the manner in which he sits astride two destinies (one positive the other ultimately negative), his relationship with ‘Sol’, draws into sharp relief the complex task that LOCSP has set itself.

Similarly, several of ‘Jay’s’ friends and teammates have benefited from LOCSP’s work in ways, which do not fall easily from the coaching handbook. Whilst ‘Zaidie’, a refugee from Sierra Leone, began to withdraw from the programme after a couple of years this was in response to his own failure to achieve the high standards he had set for himself which are now being displayed in other directions and which do not undermine his respect for the work of LOCSP. As ‘Sol’ reflects:

He’s become a DJ. ‘DJ collect’ I think his name is, so erm its still, I mean he is a bit disillusioned by the football cos obviously... he went to many trials. Unfortunately he wasn’t successful ‘ere... he did work hard to be, he was a bit unfortunate on a few occasions so erm I think he got a bit disillusioned by the whole thing, erm so he stopped, he stopped playing, stopped playing with us, he hasn’t played with us for a little while, but he still comes over and he stays in touch... I think he’ll be back... yeah, he’ll be back, he’ll be back, he’ll be back definitely, definitely. Cos I think he misses it like he was over there yesterday saying he wants to play next week and this and that, he’ll be back, he’ll be back... I actually spoke to him yesterday, said he wants to come back but the nights that we train, he’s at college doing his accountancy so that makes it difficult. So I think he, he’ll be back...

‘Lewis’ on the other hand, whilst always regarded as the least likely to get involved in football or sport in any serious kind of way as his aspirations lay elsewhere, has since gone on to University but also remains in contact with ‘Sol’ and comes down to see the team during breaks from University. In turn this continued contact and belief in the programme has led to his own involvement with the Football in the Community Scheme at Wolverhampton Wanderers where he has become one of the star community coaches.

By contrast 'Jim', who was referred to the Eastside team from a local drug agency, whilst having completed an Introduction to Coaching course and coached successfully on the programme's summer courses has recently been charged with possession in a drugs case. In this respect 'Jim' continues to walk the more familiar tightrope between the prospect of legitimate employment and activities and the 'riskyness' of his former lifestyles.

Reflecting on the diverse and flexible ways in which engagement with the project can evolve 'Mo's' case is also significant. 'Mo' has remained a committed solid player but has also got into DJing and in relation to this development was able to perform at a summer Splash event in Stoke Newington for which he was paid. Despite the voluntary work he was doing for LOCSP he could not be employed to do coaching as he was not trained but he was able to work on the disco. As 'Sol' recalls

We were able to say 'look, you know if you want to do the disco, we will pay you to do it 'cos you know your trained to do it, your professional, 'cos that's what he does, so he came down here and done that so erm he helped us out.

He also continues to come to training every week and plays for the team and remains committed to helping the team play at a higher level and whilst other players may have drifted away he is becoming closer to the organisation as well as the team as a consequence of his wider involvement.

Reflecting on these short biographies it is clear that despite their surroundings, in many respects the young men encountered by LOCSP are often just very ordinary guys who happen to live and socialise in an area that has been characterised as suffering from an excess of social problems. As 'Sol', their main point of contact reflects:

We are working with these people and we just see 'em as you know young people of sixteen, sixteen plus and we're working with them and they're on, you know what's supposed to be like a kind of rundown council estate, you know, if we wasn't there would they be better would they be the same or would they be worse. I don't know, I ain't got a clue; I just ain't got a clue.

Outcomes are clearly hard to measure but what is significant is that two and half years after identifying these young men all of them were still engaged with the project in some way and maintained personal relations with the coach who first made contact with them. This is a reflection of the journeys they have shared. Perhaps it is the normality and banality of their situations, which is the best testimony to LOCSP's work on the Woodberry Down.

What seems important is the extent to which LOCSP provides the potential for rather than a guarantee of a more positive destiny. This potential seems to be at least partly wrapped up in the ability of the organisation to provide training and employment opportunities, which extend beyond the involvement in sporting competition alone. It is the extent to which the community sports coach acts as a recognisable and achievable role model for young men who are provided with the opportunity to achieve those goals for themselves through the attainment of qualifications as well as doing paid sessional coaching for LOCSP themselves. In 'Ad's' terms:

I always just think back to the sort of stuff that we're doing and Positive Futures is doing is in essence, it's just engagement, it's just because in certain areas that whole infrastructure of youth clubs or church groups or whatever people got involved with in the 50s and 60s to develop young people's leadership skills, aren't there any more. And all we're doing is replicating that really. It's nothing scientific or its just finding committed staff that are interested in this kind of work and are going to do it. There's nothing mesmerising. It's just what used to happen all the time...just bringing through young leaders. When your 13, 14, given responsibility. Again like on school trips or anything like that it's being given responsibility for stuff. That's all it is. And then giving them opportunities to go on and do other things.

In this sense aspects of LOCSP's work relate to the idea of organic growth and the creation of participatory and flexible communities, which we reflect on further in the final section of this report.

### Key issues

One of the key markers of success for LOCSP and for the estate-based work in particular has been the transition from participant to coach. To make any real sense of the work of LOCSP one has to understand that development and rehabilitation is not to be discovered in the short-term. What seems important is the extent to which LOCSP provides the potential for rather than a guarantee of a more positive destiny.

### Urban myths and mundane realities: Authenticity, local knowledge, discrimination and the everyday

Whilst characterised by an inflated fear of crime and above average levels of reported crime, in areas such as the Gascoigne and Woodberry Down such notoriety is simultaneously a source of resentment and cause for celebration amongst its young residents. Each escalation of violence a travesty for its victims whilst adding to the stock of street gossip, local mythology and the veneer of urban authenticity. Survival strategies in the East End of London have long coalesced with a culture of 'ducking and diving' that gives legitimacy to the practice of a range of pseudo criminal practices that are 'essentially working class, favouring an entrepreneurial style that is rooted in pre-industrial forms of bargaining and exchange'.<sup>37</sup>

Accordingly, engagement with young men from these locales and more particularly young offenders referred to LOCSP's Eastside team from the probation and drug treatment services requires a certain willingness to tolerate the masquerade of these cultural attachments:

*Eastside's first season competing in a Thursday afternoon works' league had gone well. The police team had raised concerns with the local league about professional obligations which forbade them to consort with known criminals, but apart from that the transition from kick-about team to something altogether more structured, organised and responsible had run smoothly.*

*At the end of the season a trip to compete in a bank holiday invitational competition appealed as not only a fitting reward to the Eastside players who had contributed to the success of the last seven months, but also as a team-building exercise which would further consolidate the emergent sense of unity and purpose felt by squad members.*

*The coach taking us to East Anglia picked us up at nine o'clock. A team from Portsmouth had already made the back section of the coach their own. As we boarded the coach the visible contrasts between 'us' and 'them' served as metaphors of social worlds far apart. The squad from Portsmouth were white, every one of them. Only two of our team shared their complexion. Stone Island motifs suggest that the south coast contingent have an allegiance to a soccer casual hooligan subculture whilst the Evisu flourish conspicuous on the outfits of Eastside players and hooded tops marked out different sub cultural sensibilities. As T kept on saying:*

*'It's a London thing' - a black cockney garage scene of a thing.*

*The unwritten small print of expensive designer labels warned that these colours might not mix. T cranked up his sound system. The coach radio piped out Radio One.*

*As we wind our way through an East London vista of multi-culturalism, lots of different shades walk high streets of little opportunity, save cheap international call-centres and charity shops that sell donated goods to the needy. London traffic is slow; you can look out of the window and travel step by wheel with a pedestrian of your choice.*

*The Portsmouth team quietly contemplate this corridor of the metropolis.*

*T plays his music loudly and proudly; he plays it for Eastside, black London telling the yokels how it is - that's how he sees it.*

*'It's a London thing' is the shout every time T increases the volume and the rear section mutter their displeasure.*

*Walking slowly and deliberately down the gauntlet, a Portsmouth lad approaches the driver and asks*

<sup>37</sup> Hobbs, D. (1988) *Doing the Business: Entrepreneurship, The Working Class and Detectives in the East End of London*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p.101

him to turn the volume up on the radio. Everybody heard, he had wanted them to, all of them:

*'We're not mugs, never heard of the Portsmouth thing?'*

*He turns around and walks toward his friends... Having struck back he now had to walk back.*

*T pumped up the volume. The slow walk back to hometown friends demanded a Spaghetti Western backing track, it was too noisy to hear the competing beats, he walked like John Wayne all the same.*

*'Pussy, pussy-man'.*

*He ignores it, but you can see that he is glad that he has wound them up.*

*We arrive. It's taken forever. No party gave way; they just played the music louder. The coach driver wasn't enjoying himself, the friction and noise disturbing his comfort.*

*'I don't care if you smoke lads'.*

*The Portsmouth lads smoked, the purists from Leyton waved hands over noses and said loudly that they didn't want to stink like a tramp.*

*Finally it kicked off as we waited for the bags. Bodies thrust into each other, arms stretched out. T is in the middle of the melee with the gauntlet-walker.*

*'He called me a nigger, man'.*

*'Sol' places himself in the middle of it all:*

*'leave it!' We walk away.*

*'He called him a nigger, y'know. 'Sol', serious, he called him a nigger'.*

*The Portsmouth white boys head for their 'chalets'.*

*We have arrived in a land that time should have forgotten, a 'Heidi-hi' holiday park. Happy white families eating fish and chips, Dads in knotted hankies, a communal celebration of all that is good when the sun shines on 'good old Blighty'. They cannot help but stare at the more contemporary insurgents.*

*As we walk around the amusement arcades and tacky souvenir shops it was impossible not to be conscious of the stir we were causing amongst the other holidaymakers. It felt as if these people could not understand what black boys were doing here. None of these onlookers could possibly have known that this was a football team of ex-offenders and drug abusers but they knew that they were black...*

Alongside such exclusionary sentiment, relentlessly played to by the young participants in search of credibility, respect and authenticity, the areas in question and those who inhabit them are characterised by mundane everyday qualities and vulnerabilities. As 'Ad' reflected in the aftermath of the joint Gascoigne-Woodberry Down trip to Berlin:

*I mean that's one of the things that struck me on that trip, is...that things seemed to go from one level of being very mature sort of quite streetwise London kids who you know can talk the talk or whatever, to sometimes swinging back to the other level of absolutely appearing absolutely quite naive. Not immature, that's not the right way of putting it. Sort of a real inexperience...Yeah it was quite sweet, yes. It was like a school trip in a way. That's right. They were all trying to be cool and yet when it comes to it they're just like, yeah, they're still that age.*

*...Back in Great Yarmouth after the first match of the tournament the players change into their finery and we take a walk away from the resort down a country path which leads us to a quintessentially English village.*

*Evening strollers cast us curious looks but the atmosphere seems somehow lighter than the resort.*

*The shelves of the VG store were scoured for ingredients, which might give an edge in tonight's cookery, play off; 'you like pasta 'Sol'?'*

*When we return to the chalets the players have a knockabout before repeating the previous night's social agenda. In-between hands of cards and boasts about superior cooking skills the talk was all about football.*

*'Did you see me skin him'?*

*'They thought they were gonna murder us, you see their faces when I scored?'*

*'We can win this y'know, if we can play like we can tomorrow we can win this'.*

*Nice boys, doing nice things before 'Tone' upped the ante:*

*'The Pompey lot got through, we might get them in the final'.*

### **Key issues**

In areas such as the Gascoigne and Woodberry Down notoriety is simultaneously a source of resentment and cause for celebration amongst its young residents. Accordingly, engagement with young men from these locales requires a certain willingness to tolerate if not indulge the masquerade of these cultural attachments.

## Section 5. 'Playing the game': Delivery and professional practice

### Blazers and tracksuits: Conventional approaches to community sport provision

According to Torkildson<sup>38</sup> there are two key approaches to sport and recreation provision: social planning and community development.

#### *Social Planning*

The social planning approach is concerned with meeting consumer needs and ultimately has a limited view of citizenship. This perspective can basically be characterised as a 'top down' approach which views participants as consumers of services. It emphasises the importance of management and administrative skills, which need to be applied to establish consumer 'needs' and develop plans for the distribution of available resources.

This perspective has heavily influenced the various sports councils' approach towards the organisation of sport in Britain over the last 30 years but has also been subjected to concerted criticism, particularly in relation to its failure to address the needs of women and minority groups. Yule's critique is premised upon the following key failings:

1. Failure to locate policy/programming within a wider social, political and economic context;
2. Lack of analysis of power relations;
3. The treatment of individual lives and recreation policy/programming as distinct spheres each surrounded by their own constraints and barriers;
4. The extent to which interventions are seen to 'play at the edges', thus maintaining the status quo rather than achieving 'real' transformations in people's lives, social outlooks and wider social and political relations.<sup>39</sup>

#### *Community Development*

In contrast to the social planning approach, from a community development perspective the emphasis is placed on finding ways of organising sport, which set out:

- To work with people who may not normally participate in sports;
- To benefit the recreationally disadvantaged;
- To provide opportunities for participation;
- To help people to help themselves;
- To democratise and decentralise provision;
- To generate community empowerment.

The emphasis is placed upon outreach approaches and organisation from the 'bottom up', which implies a quite different approach towards the management and delivery of community sports resources.

The key distinctions between the two approaches can be established in terms of the categories outlined in the following table.

<sup>38</sup> Torkildsen, G (1998) *Leisure & Recreation Management*, London, ESN Spon

<sup>39</sup> Yule, J. (1990) *Gender & Leisure Policy*, Department of Applied & Community Studies, Bradford & Ilkley Community College

*Table 2: Rationales underpinning modes of sports service delivery*

Mainstream Sports Delivery	Community Sports
National and Regional	Local
Activity Focus	People Focus
Facility Based	Outreach
Formal	Informal
Trends	Barriers
Commercial	Social
Expertise	Enablers
Professionals	Animateurs
Standardised	Flexible
Detached	Empathetic
Prescriptive	Empowering

### The LOCSP approach: Planning, flexibility and community engagement

Whilst the approaches to engaging with young people outlined previously are very much characterised by a casual, easy going and confident style which places an emphasis on the interests and outlook of individual participants, the coaching sessions and sports events that LOCSP organise are nothing of the sort. Indeed much of the respect that LOCSP staff have built up amongst participants in their schemes is derived from the organisational and coaching skills they possess and their ability to make participants work hard and emulate their own commitment and sense of responsibility. The point of departure with more conventional planned interventions is that, in the main, the young people recognise the coaches as ‘one of their own’ and worthy of emulation. As such the LOCSP approach might be considered as something of a hybrid of the social planning and community development approaches in that it relies upon mainstream funding, targeted interventions and the expertise of staff to engage and empower young people in ‘community’ settings.

#### Key issues

The LOCSP approach might be considered as something of a hybrid of the social planning and community development approaches. Much of the respect that LOCSP staff built up amongst participants in their schemes is derived from the organisational and coaching skills they possess and their ability to make participants work hard and emulate their own commitment and sense of responsibility.

### *The organisation and structure of LOCSP estate based sports*

LOCSP is responsible for the organisation of an almost bewilderingly extensive programme of sports activities ranging from taster sessions through to Leyton Orient Football Club's own youth development programme and Centre of Excellence. During the period of the research in the region of 150 sessions were organised on a weekly basis with between 4 and 5000 participants. These were delivered across the East End of London and further a field in relation to a wide variety of contributions to the community sport agenda.

The estate-based work constitutes only one element of this work but represents an increasingly significant part of the overall programme. Sessions were organised on the Woodberry Down estate from 3.30 to 7.30 on a Monday night, training for the Eastside team in Stoke Newington on Tuesdays from 7:00 to 9:00 and for younger participants on Wednesdays. Sessions were organised on the Gascoigne estate on Mondays and Wednesdays from 5:00 to 9:00. Sessions took place on the Beaumont estate in Waltham Forest on Monday's from 3:30 to 5:30 and on the Teviot estate in Tower Hamlets from 5:30 to 7:00. Weight training sessions were also organised at Walthamstow YMCA with referrals from a range of criminal justice and drug and alcohol treatment agencies on Tuesdays between 2:00 and 4:00. Beyond these coaching sessions LOCSP organised twenty-seven different football teams.

*Table 3: LOCSP Football Teams - 2003/2004*

<b>Team name</b>	<b>Locality</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>League</b>	<b>Age</b>
Eastside	Open	Intermediate & Junior	Essex Business House Essex Business	16+ 16+
Leyton All Stars	Waltham Forest	Junior	Ilford District All Nations Wanstead Flats	16+ U16s U14s
St Mary's	Gascoigne	Junior	All Nations	16+
Gascoigne Estate Crew	Gascoigne	Junior	Amalgamated Borough League	U13 & U14
Stratford	Stratford	Junior	Amalgamated Borough League	U12 & U15
TAG	Tower Hamlets	Junior	Wanstead Flats	U11s
Stoke Newington	Woodbury Down	Junior	All Nations	U16s & U14s
Woodbury Down	Woodbury Down	Junior	All Nations	U16s
RHG	Tower Hamlets		Amalgamated Borough League	U16s
LOASS			Rural Friendly	2x U8s 2x U9s 2x U10s 2x U11s U14s
Colebrook Royals			Barking Echo	U7s U10s U11s

The majority of these teams emerged in one way or another through the estate based football sessions linked to local SRB, Positive Futures and From Offending to Employment programmes. At the pinnacle lies Eastside, which draws on players from across the estates that LOCSP work in, but particularly the Woodberry Down, and played at Intermediate/Senior level in the Essex Business House League, a Saturday league in the FA pyramid system.

### Key issues

LOCSP is responsible for the organisation of an almost bewilderingly extensive programme of sports activities

### *From cradle to grave: Negative 'community' labels and the pressure to grow*

Through the early part of its development Leyton Orient community programme's sport development activities were not accorded much regard beyond those involved with the scheme itself. Rather the activities were seen to represent a social function, to illustrate the football club's good intentions and foster good will in the 'community'. Ironically it was with LOCSP's movement out of the safer elements of the football in the community scheme and into the sphere of diversionary and estate based work that a reassessment of their wider sports development work was prompted.

The movement into estate based work soon revealed the need for LOCSP to begin organising its own teams and such was the quality of a number of the players recruited that it soon became imperative to develop progression routes that would satisfy those players aspirations as well as reinforce the credibility of the organisation in the face of future generations of players. Initially there were efforts to link up with the Centre of Excellence at Leyton Orient where coaches were sent to build links and progression routes on the basis of their access to unconventional scouting networks and also to develop their own coaching skills. But the 'community' tag is not one which carries much weight in professional football, and whilst some youngsters were taken on, following tip offs, some of LOCSP's coaches soon found that their own coaching talents were better appreciated elsewhere. Ironically a reputation that was leading to the free flow of funds from government bodies on the one side was also closing off opportunities for progression in the world of football.

There was the danger that LOCSP's interventions would be restricted to a one tier structure despite the emergence of players of undoubted talent through the estate based teams and the Probation Service sponsored FOTE programme and the need to provide other avenues for their progression as they matured. Whilst the pyramid system, which underpins both the amateur and professional games in England, provides almost limitless opportunities to play at higher and higher standards, the concern was that other clubs, particularly as players moved up the system, might not be sensitive to the needs and circumstances of those that LOCSP had engaged. The conventional disciplinary regimes of the football hierarchy, which does not afford second chances easily, was seen as a danger which might undo the patient work that had been invested in many of the participants in LOCSP's activities.

As such the organisation looked around for a team that they themselves could run in order to ease players into the higher standards of discipline required at the senior level. Having provided a couple of promising players to Stansted who play in the Essex Senior League, LOCSP took over the running of their reserve team and agreed to fund it on the basis that they could bring their own talented youngsters in and pass the most promising onto the Stansted 1st team. This development was never going to be a straightforward business given Stansted's location in the hinterlands of London and the disparity in the cultural ecologies of the areas. Whilst LOCSP's players willingly trained for the new club, pressures soon emerged which were once again related to negative perceptions of community sport projects and their participants and the exclusive tendencies of traditional sports structures.

To avoid the potential for the team to become a dumping ground for Stansted players at the end of their careers there had been an agreement that only three 'first team' players would play for the reserves at any one time. However, in the face of local concerns about the 'type' of players that LOCSP were bringing in which suggested both a racialised understanding of who should represent Stansted and the continuing negative connotation attached to 'community' sport and who it attracts, the club sought to renegotiate the 'quota' of 'their' players up

to five. The call came as something of a surprise but was dealt with true to the traditions of LOCSP. The proposal was flatly refused. Nobody dictates terms to LOCSP, particularly where there is the hint of another agenda which conflicts with the underlying principles of the organisation. 'Sol', the team coach and Grant, the LOCSP Director were against it, made the point clear to their short-term partners and with that the Stansted experiment was over.

LOCSP remained committed to their idea of internal progression routes, but the eventual fruition of that objective came as something of a surprise. After his purchase of the club, even if motivated by commercial expediency, Barry Hearn had made much of his commitment to the local community and in his 'View from the Top' commentary in the club programme (now pinned to the wall above 'Ad's' favoured desk in an act of ironic subversion) had proclaimed not only that the players and management would 'be deeply involved in the local community' but also that first team players would increasingly be drawn from that local community. Some six years later the club Chairman's memory must have been pricked as he began to notice the expertise in coaching and football development that was emerging on his doorstep under the south stand in the LOCSP offices.

During the course of our research the Programmes Manager obtained his full FA badge and was also now qualified to train coaches. He worked with the Arsenal Football Club Academy, coaching the under tens and through his work developed a degree of expertise and network of coaches which would be the envy of many lower division clubs. With the recruitment of a number of well qualified sessional coaches such as 'Kels', 'Kyle' and 'Stevo' there was a recognition that a skills base was emerging at LOCSP which challenged the conventional understanding of the community sports agency as a lightweight, social service incapable of developing genuine talent.

The point was confirmed when the club Chairman Barry Hearn called up out of the blue and asked LOCSP if they would provide a costing to help run the Leyton Orient Centre of Excellence for the nine to sixteens. Given the contacts, existing programmes and access to facilities that LOCSP had, it became clear that they were able to deliver what the club wanted at a fraction of the cost and were invited to help run certain elements of the operation in September 2003. Gary Karsa was recruited from Charlton to run things and such was the impression they made that when the youth team manager Martin Ling took on the first team manager's role LOCSP were invited to expand their role, bringing in the former Arsenal midfielder Paul Davis to oversee the senior element of the programme.

Accordingly LOCSP now had a comprehensive programme of activity extending from grassroots work with five and six year olds right through to professional football club youth team players. Other relationships existed with non-League clubs such as Boreham Wood, Bishop Stortford, Billericay and Braintree, whilst players were offered trials at Northampton Town and Bristol Rovers in the Football League. There was a sense in which the organisation was now in a position to realise the aspirations of players at all levels having painstakingly developed a range of progression routes and identified appropriate leagues for each of its teams. Indeed LOCSP was instrumental in establishing the Amalgamated Borough's League launched in March 2004 which is open to all of the programmes estate based teams. At the same time, despite the growth of an increasingly professional football development programme the organisation remained attentive to the need to adopt a range of strategies and approaches for working with different groups. Whilst the GEC now engaged in competitive structures and trained as a team, walk up sessions where the coaches facilitate the participants' organisation rather than impose rigid training structures continued on a weekly basis.

LOCSP's own approach is then understood to have been reliant on:

- The emergence and growth of LOCSP's own teams;
- The development of internal progression routes;
- The development of professional coaching skills;
- Access to facilities;
- Continuing expertise in youth/community work.

These developments presented their own dilemmas and problems. The programme's role at the intersection of 'community' activity and professional football re-invoked the concept of the cultural intermediary explored in the previous section but involved the programme in this process in new ways. Whilst widening opportunities for LOCSP's brightest talents the elitist ethos of the Centre of Excellence potentially involved the organisation

in the closing off of avenues and facing participants with the possibility of bringing closure to their aspirations to play football at the highest level. At the same time, the range of activity meant that other opportunities were always available across the variety of playing standards as well as the prospect of developing coaching skills and contributing to the programmes' work in other ways. Indeed LOCSP had been running a Centre of Excellence for girls and young women for over three years with great success.

Nevertheless the prospect does emerge of LOCSP splintering along ever multiplying lines where the boundaries of one sphere of activity have the potential to both clash with and compliment others. Whilst the respect and credibility that goes with the community sports coaches work will undoubtedly be enhanced by the recognition of their skills in the wider sphere of sports administration and development, coaches would be forced to wear a greater variety of 'masks' representing a wider variety of interests.

Nevertheless it is a model that has attracted interest outside the club and six other professional clubs had been in touch to find out more about how their community schemes might take on a similar role.

### Key issues

Through the early part of its development Leyton Orient community programme's sport development activities were not accorded much regard beyond those involved with the scheme itself. A skills base then emerged which challenged the conventional understanding of the community sports agency as a lightweight, social service incapable of developing genuine talent.

### *Tough love: Sport, discipline, self-control and responsibility*

Ultimately, LOCSP and particularly its estate based activities remain, by definition, outreach projects. In accordance with its organisational philosophy, they are organised, funded and monitored independently just as the football development element was set to become a trading entity in its own right. As such, the estate-based activities themselves tend to reflect the personality and outlook of the individual coaching staff, whilst being underpinned by the inclusionary philosophy of LOCSP as a whole.

In addition to the ability to engage participants, this area of work relies upon the possession of much sought after skills and the ability to coach them to others. It also requires a willingness to be flexible; to acknowledge that what is suitable for those who aspire to the highest sporting standards may be distinct from those seeking to fill their time or to extend their social profile. Two episodes illustrate the point.

### ...A cold night in Stoke Newington

*Stoke Newington has a reputation. Londoners who have never been to this part of North East London 'know' about Stoke Newington. Stoke Newington attracts public investment because central government believes the place to be in need of 're-generation'. Just across the road from Stoke Newington School stands the new local leisure centre. Funded by lottery money the building was several million pounds over budget when finally completed. Nevertheless its eventual opening was heralded as marking a significant and positive development in the rebuilding of a supposedly shattered community. The excellent sporting facilities that the centre had to offer were beyond doubt. What troubled community sports activists (and those more generally concerned with urban deprivation and its unequal consequences) was the pricing mechanism that was put into place. Prices were regarded as being too high, for the waged, the unwaged, children, pensioners. People have voiced suspicions that the facility, rather than serving the needs of the traditionally under-privileged population of the borough, represented a subsidised sports centre for the increasing number of young professionals moving into the area who are otherwise to be found in the trendy bars and bistros of suddenly hip Church Street.*

*Stoke Newington School has also attracted public investment, the astro turf where LOCSP runs its training sessions for the Eastside team representing a proportion of the new spending. However the school itself is still regarded as failing, with young urban professionals exercising choice in their involvement with the 'community', by tending to send their children to be educated outside of the borough of Hackney. A*

*stark reminder of the divisions, which provide the backdrop to LOCSP's work...*

*It's the middle of November, Tuesday night, 7pm – heavy rain is falling diagonally, driven by a spiteful wind. It's cold. 'Stevo', the coach, parks the mini-bus close to the gate leading to the astro-turf. There are six of us in the bus; 'Stevo' has been regaling us with tales of his times as a pro in Norway. He stops the stories as we pull up.*

*'Right fellas, five minutes to change, and then I want you ready to go. Anybody late and they're going to be running for some time. You don't want to be running tonight'.*

*He opens the door and shouts the same instructions to those huddled in small groups around the car park. The pitch at Stoke Newington School is state of the art, protected by a five-metre high perimeter fence, it gleams electric green. The floodlights are on but the changing rooms are shut. Players make do in the back of cars or under the steps, anywhere that offers relief from the weather.*

*'I need to warm up man. This is too cold you know. I need to live somewhere where the sun shines'.*

*'Stevo' has a training session planned.*

*'I always have something planned, but one of the things that I've learned since starting this community work is that you've got to be flexible. You can have something all mapped out in your head but when you get to the session you might only get six kids when you were expecting twenty so you've got to change everything. You've got to be able to think on your feet'.*

*Despite the appalling conditions there is a good turn out tonight, only a couple of the regulars are missing. Those training compete for a place in Eastside, LOCSP's most senior club side. Many have been associated with the Programme for some considerable time. They have become used to the rules that 'Stevo' and 'Sol' lay down. Those who miss training without any reasonable excuse know that the sanction involves exclusion from the selection process. Similarly those that arrive late are told to go home and forget about playing on Saturday.*

*As most of the squad begin to go through their warm-up exercises 'Joel' jogs to the side of the pitch towards 'Louise'. Like so many others 'Louise' came to the Programme by accident. Looking for a work placement to satisfy the requirements of her sports science degree at university she arrived 'on spec' at Brisbane Road to ask whether the professional club could use her services. Disappointed, but not disheartened, by the club having no need for her she spotted the sign hanging over the south stand indicating the entrance to LOCSP's office. Nobody at the Programme had ever thought about it before but when 'Louise' had finished explaining what she could offer she was immediately brought on board. That was two years ago. Tonight she guides 'Joel' through a light workout, which is designed to alleviate his calf injury, to bring him back to match fitness as quickly as possible. 'Joel' looks like he is in pain, he doesn't look like a man who is enjoying himself, every so often he grimaces. Nonetheless, he hangs on every instruction that 'Louise' offers; he visibly strains with effort when she asks him to pick up the pace. 'Joel' wants to be fit again as soon as possible, Saturday cannot come quickly enough.*

*'Stevo's' coaching qualifications set him aside from other team managers in the league in which Eastside compete. 'Stevo' insists,*

*'You go on these courses, and you have to prove this and that, all technical stuff. But when you train these guys it's all different. The things that I have learnt that have been most useful for this kind of work I learnt from 'Sol'. I have got my Level one and two coaching badges but a lot of that stuff isn't much use here'.*

*Nevertheless as an observer you cannot help but be impressed by the aura of professionalism which surrounds tonight's training session.*

*'First five minutes sprinting then fifteen minutes fast-feet work, then we do twenty minutes cardiovascular work. For the last hour we concentrate on a particular aspect of the game; heading, defending, corners. We do that in monthly cycles, it's defending this month'.*

*The rain continued to belt down throughout the night's session. The squad ran and jumped and followed commands, when they became tired and wetter and colder they ran and jumped and followed commands.*

*The training sessions have their own rules of etiquette, which govern social relations in a way, which is*

distinct from match days and more informal meetings between the squad and the coaches. Here there is a complete monopoly of power, here what 'Stevo' says the squad does, there is no arguing (a few groans when he tells them to do another lap of the pitch). There is no room for banter, there is an acceptance that this is hard work that has to be done, that it is all in everybody's best interests both at an individual and team level. 'Stevo' snaps out his instructions,

*'Half-way line, SPRINT!'*

'Stevo' puts away for the time being that part of his character that revels in telling funny stories about his past ('the first training session I did in Norway it was minus eighteen. I got back to my hotel room and I cried like a little baby');

*'Come on! I need more effort. You're young men, young should be fit'.*

They jog round the pitch lit up by the electric lights. To the side 'Joel' hops towards 'Louise' on his injured leg. It looks all very professional, the 'real thing', it looks like hard work.

'Jay' tells me that a lot of players who come to the training sessions soon drop out of the squad.

'They don't like 'Sol', they don't like his way of doing things, they think he is too tough, that he hasn't got any respect for them. They're fools because they don't understand that he is doing it for their benefit. Once he banned me and 'Lewis' and 'Danny' for six games because he caught us going out the night before a game when we were in that tournament in Holland. I was pissed off with him at the time but I came to learn that you have to have the discipline, that it's good for you it helps you develop and move forward'.

With ten minutes of the training session left 'Sol' arrives to look over the squad that he has been so instrumental in developing. He watches with a tutored look. When 'Stevo' calls an end to the session the spell of subservience is broken.

*'Alright 'Sol' you coming to watch us on Saturday'.*

*'You call that running I seen my little two year old girl run faster than that'.*

*'Hey 'Sol' you should see this Hackney girl I'm seeing'.*

*'You seeing a girl? She can't be seeing you properly'.*

### ...A hot afternoon in Walthamstow

It's got to be the hottest day of the year. Scottish 'Doug' arrived at the office early, Scottish 'Doug' only comes to the office on a Tuesday and each Tuesday he arrives early.

*'Anyone for a brew?' he asks as he switches on the kettle.*

This is the usual Tuesday routine. Scottish 'Doug' has brought a friend with him, she has come before but she isn't as regular as him. She will come for a couple of Tuesdays on the trot and then we might not see her for a month or so. Scottish 'Doug' and his friend don't look like the regular kind of LOCSP 'client'. Certainly neither of them will celebrate their fortieth birthday again, but attempting to guess their age is difficult because they both have sallow complexions and haunted eyes that tell of hard living and premature ageing.

*'Five minutes guys'.*

'Sol' is talking to a new recruit to the rehabilitation programme which now takes referrals from London's only residential crack detox and a less regimented alcohol project in Hackney as well as those who established contact through LOCSP's football programmes. 'Alex' is about twenty, he has short-cropped hair, he is about six foot one with a lean well-toned frame. 'Alex' got out of prison two weeks ago; he had been there for two years. 'Sol' is telling him about Eastside, when they train, when they play. 'Alex' played for the prison football team.

We get into 'Sol's' car, the three 'clients' squeezing into the back. Scottish 'Doug' and his friend talk about a mutual acquaintance that has fallen off the wagon. 'Alex' points out a youth club and tells us that he used to box for their team.

When we arrive at the YMCA 'Zaidie', 'Gav', 'Tel' and a couple of others are waiting for us on the steps.

*'Come on 'Sol' we've been waiting ten minutes'.*

*'Sol' looks at his mobile, unperturbed;*

*'The session starts at two o'clock, it's five-to two'.*

*'Sol' glides by 'Gav' and co and says hello to the woman at reception.*

*'It's a hot one today', she says familiarly and hands 'Sol' a set of keys. Scottish 'Doug' heads for the changing rooms, everybody else is already dressed for the gym. Scottish 'Doug' is an amiable sort, he always asks how you are and he always seems quite content, but conversation never goes beyond the initial 'ha ya daein?'*

*Scottish 'Doug' always takes his bag into the toilet cubicle and changes behind a locked door. His gym outfit covers his legs and arms. Scottish 'Doug' gives the impression that he has something to hide.*

*It is a smaller turn-out than usual for the regular Tuesday afternoon gym session, but this really must be the hottest day of the year and even though the fan is on maximum speed I'm completely soaked in sweat before getting close to the exercise bike. Those who are missing had probably decided that there were better ways of spending a summer's afternoon. 'Sol' doesn't seem particularly fazed, the gym session has always been a fairly casual affair from his perspective; clients drop in and out on a regular basis, even if those on the residential programme are watched over by their supervisors. Sanctions do not follow absences in the way that they do with failure to make a football coaching session, it is as if this is an additional extra available to all those who want to make use of it.*

*'Tel' is sitting on the chest-press machine. He is huge. 'Sol' laughs and jokes in admiration, he talks about 'penitentiary muscles'. Just like Scottish 'Doug', 'Tel' is only to be seen on a Tuesday afternoon. He doesn't play football but he very rarely misses the gym session. 'Tel' trains by himself, he works through the machines methodically before moving on to the free-weights. He rarely speaks to anybody; he just gets on with his business, lifting improbably heavy pieces of metal, bulking-up an already considerable frame. 'Sol' asks him how he is. 'Sol' has already told me that 'Tel' is due in court shortly and that he anticipates a custodial sentence. Penitentiary muscles.*

*'Sol' leads 'Alex' through an induction, he explains authoritatively how to use the machines properly and safely. 'Alex' knows how to use the weights properly and safely, he learnt all of that in prison. An athletic frame and well-defined muscles pay tribute to knowledge put to good effect. 'Alex' is gushing with enthusiasm, he needed something to do now that he was out. He loves the gym and he reckons that he will fit easily into the Eastside set-up.*

*'I've got good skills, I'm fast'. He is a lively and bouncy character.*

*I am dying a death on the exercise bike. Every time it tries to take me up its virtual hills my legs grind to an impotent halt and my eyes sting shut against the rivers of sweat. To my side are Scottish 'Doug' and his female friend. They take their time and chat gently about people and things that they have in common.*

*Scottish 'Doug' stinks. He reeks of bad living. Stale nicotine runs through his pores and assaults our nostrils. If it had been anybody else the others would have been merciless in their condemnation. But 'Doug' and his friend seem to have been afforded special status, somehow regarded as different, certainly 'not one of us'. Scottish 'Doug's' foul stench is politely unremarked upon because we all guess that it is part of his problem and he cannot really help it. The gentle chat between he and his friend is under-scored by a resigned sadness. It is about friends who did not make it to the other side, friends who made it to the other side but who then turned back and drowned, most of all it is talk of a new reality that was impoverished and nowhere near as much fun as the 'old times' – nevertheless one that had to be adhered to in order to survive.*

*I move on to the free-weights and team up with 'Zaidie', 'Gav' and 'Sol'. Zaidie has just completed a set of leg exercises.*

*'Gotta build 'em up for speed on the pitch.*

*'Zaidie' has recently had trials with Northampton Town, he feels that he is on the cusp of 'making it' as a pro, all that is needed is some fine-tuning. We move on to bench presses. Starting with a set of ten repetitions of 60kg we increase the weight until a 'lift' is beyond an individual's capabilities.*

*Encouragement is shouted when someone begins to falter.*

*'Come on, strength. Go on you can do it. That's it – go on, go on!'*

*As we start to fall by the wayside 'Zaidie' goes past 100kg's. It is by any standards an incredible effort; at most he must be only five foot nine and no more than ten and a half stone. He is incredibly focused;*

*'I need more strength man. 'Sol' you gotta sort this out, one time a week isn't no good, I'm not gonna get any bigger'.*

*Some banter is shared about bigger muscles and sexual conquests but there is no mistaking why 'Zai-die' is here, he sees this as one of the last things that he needs to get right before he moves into the big time.*

*For the last ten minutes 'Sol' runs a sit-up session. It is the only time throughout the afternoon that there has been a structured, coach-led, exercise. Scottish 'Doug' and his friend leave to get changed;*

*'See ya 'Sol',*

*'Tel' bends laden dumbbells around his biceps. Everybody else attempts to keep up with 'Sol'. I give up after a couple of minutes, others keep on going, groaning out in pain;*

*'Enough 'Sol' man!'*

*A burst of desperate laughter prompts 'Sol's' admonishment,*

*'If you're fit to laugh you're fit to work. Another ten.'*

*We never see 'Alex' again.*

In these two contrasting episodes the commitments to flexibility and credibility that underpin the engagement strategies discussed in the previous section are allied with both the practice and the prospect of a disciplinary zeal derived from a more conventional sporting discourse. In this sense the kind of community development work LOCSP applies emerges, at least partially, out of the tradition of the street based boxing club, Boys Club and any number of more traditional activity based youth interventions. It places an emphasis on the need for discipline, 'good' behaviour, respect for others, an absence of foul language and the importance of listening. Misbehaviour is met with sanctions and the withdrawal of privileges. There are no fixed disciplinary codes but rather individual, adaptable approaches, which are 'true' to the coach's outlook and based in long established codes of respect and honour associated with the working class 'habitus' of East London.

In the sporting context discipline is demanded in return for the coaches own organisational discipline and commitment, with benefits accorded to those who take on board the mantra. Away from the sports field there is an easing of relations, a willingness to talk, to befriend and offer advice that owes much to the model of the 'patriarchal family' that characterises successful football clubs and their managers at the elite level.

In many respects the approach borrows from the Social Responsibility model developed by Don Hellison in the United States which suggests the following criteria for the development of activity based youth development programmes:

1. Treat youth as resources to be developed. Build on the strengths they already possess, and emphasize their competence and mastery;
2. Focus on the whole person-the emotional, social and cognitive as well as physical dimensions of the self;
3. Respect the individuality of youth, including cultural differences and developmental needs;
4. Empower youth.;
5. Give youth clear, demanding (but not unreasonable) expectations based on a strong explicit set of values;
6. Help youth envision possible futures for themselves;
7. Provide both a physically and psychologically safe environment;
8. Keep program numbers small and encourage participation over a long period of time, emphasize belonging and membership;
9. Maintain a local connection;
10. Provide courageous and persistent leadership in the face of systemic obstacles;
11. Provide significant contact with a caring adult.<sup>40</sup>

The trip to Berlin provided the clearest indication of LOCSP's collective philosophy towards the management of sporting practice within its estate based projects. This can be considered in terms of the need for meticulous organisation, the provision of opportunities for social development, a professional commitment to sporting excellence and a lack of forgiveness of indiscipline. Through our observations on that trip we consider those elements here in turn.

<sup>40</sup> Hellison, D. & Cutworth, N. (1997) Extended day programs for urban children and youth. From theory to practice in H. Walberg, O. Reyes & R. Wessberg (eds.) Children and youth: Interdisciplinary perspectives, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

## 1. Organisation

'Ad' had organised the trip. FC Union Berlin had itself traditionally attracted a working class supporter base. Following the division of Berlin after the Second World War, the geographical location of the club's venue dictated that the club played in the East German league. The subsequent collapse of the Berlin Wall and the re-unification of Germany and the German football league determined that the team found themselves relegated to non-league status. In recent years the club's fortunes had improved dramatically and after a number of successful promotion campaigns, at the time of the trip they were playing in the German equivalent of the English Championship with an outside chance of promotion to the top flight. 'Ad' had worked with the Berlin office of the British Council and Henry Hauseler, chief of youth development at FC Union, toward arranging this trip.

LOCSP were sending out a representative team from three of the estates on which they worked. Selection for the representative team was based on a number of criteria: Each estate should have roughly equal representation; as strong a team as possible should be sent; but only players who were still presently active and committed to their local team would be considered.

Thirteen players made up the squad. Five members of staff made up the rest of the party. As well as 'Ad' and 'Sol' the other staff members were 'Kels', 'Gav' and 'Graham'. 'Graham' was a full time LOCSP development coach who had been coaching the representative team in the lead up to the trip and was to act as team manager.

On the flight, which 'Ad' had managed to book the players onto for the sum of £1 each by snapping up a low cost airline deal on the internet, our 'travel agent' was keen to 'fill us in' on organisational details that we were vague/mistaken about. Without wishing to do so, filled only by his own enthusiasm and fascination with all that he is involved with 'Ad' can make some of the participants feel a little awkward in these situations, appearing a little too overbearing. He had worked his socks off to get this trip up and running. He believes in this work, he believes it's a 'proper' thing to do. It's just that the way he and 'Sol' go about doing it 'properly' is different because their respective roles are different, whilst complimentary.

After dealing with the complications at passport control we were eventually marshalled onto a coach that would take us to FC Union's stadium where a training session was to take place. 'Ad' took a lift in Henry's smart new BMW. A couple of the players ask where he has gone and 'Sol' cracks some jokes about 'us and them' and preferring to stick with the boys rather than 'selling out'.

The stadium was set in woodland, driving through the trees we saw that the ground itself was surrounded by training pitches and various buildings belonging to the club. Fans of the club, wearing scarves and replica shirts, were walking away from the ground clutching bags from the club's souvenir shop. There was an unmistakable feeling that we were driving into something big.

When we arrived 'Graham' lead a coaching session for an hour and then we got back on the coach to drive to the hostel where Henry had arranged for us to stay.

The hostel was set in deep woodland on the side of a large lake. It was a typical soviet construction, a grey concrete block, functional, certainly not beautiful. Before the fall of the Wall it served as the training camp for East Germany's international water-sports competitors. The walls of the foyer were covered in pictures celebrating former residents' victories.

'Graham' distributed the keys to the rooms. He had devised a list of who would share with whom. He wanted to minimise noise and any potential trouble making. Some of the players objected to their room allocation.

'No man I wanna be with .....', but 'Graham' is firm;

'That's who you're with, you wanna play tomorrow?'

Meanwhile Henry was growing increasingly restless.

'We are late already for the meal, we should be there now'. 'Sol' hurries things along.

'Right lads I need you back here in half an hour, no later'.

...The restaurant was perched improbably in the middle of the forest. Apparently it was normally closed at this time of year but had opened especially this evening to feed our group.

*Henry had organised the seating arrangements. One table was for the team, and the other was laid out for LOCSP staff, Henry, and two representatives of the Berlin office of the British Council. It was becoming clear that Henry had very firm and fixed ideas about status and rank. 'Kels' was not particularly happy about being dragged from the players' table, he sat at the far end and spoke more often to those on the other table than he did to those closer to him. Henry explained that everything had been paid for and people could order what they liked to drink. 'Graham' looked nervous and jumped up to repeat once more that this was a 'dry' night. Henry and the other two Germans ordered beers whilst we stuck to the menu of soft drinks...*

Here the role of LOCSP as cultural intermediary is put to good effect through its organisational thoroughness. The individual aspirations of staff which fuelled 'Ad's' fascination with Germany and the concept of international exchange opened up the possibility of the trip, whilst the confidence that participants have in their coaches and the Programme Manager 'Sol' made possible their involvement. Whilst individual attributes are the key at each juncture it is the combination of skills, which makes the whole process work. The arrangement of low cost travel, the European network of football contacts, the support of the British Council, the familiar authority of the estate based coaches and their ability to navigate paths through the alien hierarchical authority of passport control and elitist German football structures, the sporting know how of the squad manager and willingness to read the etiquette of the squads hosts. Each of these elements contributes to a relatively painless adventure, where the security of the travellers enables them to absorb knowledge of the world and different ways of living without feeling alienated or isolated – 'excluded'.

## 2. Opportunities for social development

*Having never been abroad before, for most of the contingent the trip to Germany was in itself something of an adventure which had the capacity to satisfy their largely mundane tourist desires. As we pulled up by the Brandenburg Gates hundreds of tourists milled underneath the imposing grandeur of the structure. The usual suspects were all there. A Chilean pipe band played away while one of their troupe invited onlookers to toss coins into an upturned sombrero. An ancient looking organ grinder and his faithful monkey belted out traditional German oompah beats. The familiarity of the tourist panhandlers sits easily with everybody, even the 'socially excluded' have been to Covent Garden. Bizarrely 'Ad' is in conversation with a film crew working on a satirical German TV show, which he recognises from the telly. A number of the team are intrigued and visibly excited by 'Ad's' association with these people carrying television cameras, huge furry sound receptors and microphones even though it is merely his own lack of inhibitions which led him to approach the crew to discuss the show he had seen.*

*'What's goin' on, how does he know these? We going to be on telly? Hey 'Ad' we going to be on telly?'*

*Four or five of our number are taking it in turns to have their pictures taken next to a chalk white mannequin who makes his money by moving in slow robotic jerks. 'Jo' poses for another picture with a rotund and jolly looking policeman whose assignment to the tourist beat seems to suit his outlook and personal qualities.*

*We move through the gate into the former no-mans-land of the city's division. We stop by a monument commemorating Russian troops who fell in Europe's last battle of the second world war. Freshly laid wreathes marked the recent anniversary of the conflict. 'Ad' translated the names of Russian squadrons. The team are less interested in history lessons than they are in the possibility of a good photo opportunity. They scramble over World War Two canons and tanks positioned on the corners of the memorial to remind us of how the fight was fought. The 'Asian sensation' sits astride the seven metre barrel of the canon with his arm muscles tensed in a Popeye pose, 'Gav', 'Jay' and other friends present wide smiles and unlikely postures for the purpose of background. Not that much interested in history but part of it all the same: Londoners from Albania, Nigeria, Jamaica, Morocco playing the tourist and goofing off where the Third Reich once stomped.*

*We walk over to the Reichstag. 'Ad' talks as he walks to those who want to listen. His enthusiasm for the history of our surroundings is unmistakable whilst 'Jay' comments*

*'I just want to get to the match y'know, I wouldn't have even come if I knew it was going to be all this. I just want to play football'. 'Jay' seems nervous.*

*'It's not that I don't like all this culture. I like the culture; history stuff y'know. It's just....I dunno'.*

*We walk by a small souvenir shop, typical souvenir fare; postcards, miniature replicas, embossed mugs*



*and so on. Since our arrival a perennial call had been*

*‘Sol’, we going shopping?’ The lazy assumption had previously been that the request had been motivated by a desire to complement street-wise wardrobes and rare groove record collections. Everybody piles into the shop, cheap key rings become the subject of heated debates about value for money. ‘Our boys’ are talking about their girls, their mums and dads; about how far a little money will go.*

*‘My woman gonna kill me if I come back with nothing’. ‘Dangerous’ street-wise Londoners on the prowl for mass-produced tat.*

*We spend what seems an age in the shop. Henry is outside consulting his watch, he paces nervously.*

*‘We have to go now for the lunch; we cannot go to the Olympic Stadium. It is too late now’. We are late again. Even ‘Sol’s’ leadership qualities are put to the test when he communicates the need to go.*

*‘In a minute, got to get this’,*

*‘I got too much money left y’know’,*

*‘Lend us thirty euros’,*

*‘We going to any more shops, ‘Sol’ man?’*

*...We set off back to the hostel for lunch. Salad and pasta, an athlete’s lunch as popular with our team as everything else that has been put before them in Germany.*

*‘Straight to the chicken shop when I’m back to London.’ Bread rolls are popular.*

*‘Don’t take all of them, that’s all I’m eating’.*

*At the end of the meal ‘Graham’ taps his fork against the rim of his glass and signals the commencement of our formal service of gratitude. ‘Graham’ talks of the great opportunity of experience that Henry and his club have put before us. ‘Jo’ takes his cue at the end of ‘Graham’s’ homily and rises from his seat to present something special from us to say thank you to him for all that he has done. His speech is short but perfunctory and well received nevertheless.*

*Henry responds, he talks about his joy at being able to bring his team and our team together, and how*

*the future should cement our relationship. Henry says that he is sorry that our stay is so short, how he would have liked to have shown us more of his city. This is well received;*

*'Yeah 'Sol', we need more time'...*

Whilst in their own neighbourhoods many of these young men are incredibly street wise, trips of this kind expose a kind of naivety, which enables participants to be enriched in the most banal and everyday fashion. For some, school trips, family holidays maybe taken for granted whilst others have not had the same opportunities and experiences as 'Ad' comments:

*That might be a thing about the schools round here that they just don't have the opportunities to go on trips. They just don't have that. I mean...when I was at school every year, apart from the secondary school which was different, but certainly at primary school, we'd go away every year, to go somewhere - Bristol or the west country or we went up to Derbyshire, the Bakewell area, and we would do whole weeks and go and explore things, and I don't know that stuff's now been cut from the curriculum that you just don't do that any more. You don't go outside of your own area on organised things...I mean it was just interesting how many didn't have passports, had never been out the country - five or six of them. I mean they might have traveled, moved around London, but outside of that they were very limited. Which is part of it, quite rewarding really, that they've now been somewhere else.*

Even if the principle focus of attention outside of the football match had been on the opportunities for souvenir collection, photographs and gazing at German women, such trips do open eyes, enable events, places, people and history to be located and generate confidence. On another occasion, the prospect of sitting at a foreign dinner table or conversing with a customs official may not be so daunting, having witnessed 'Sol' navigating his way through the troubled waters. Confidence may come from experience, but experience is best gained in the company of someone who already has it and is something that grows with time. As 'Ad' went on:

*I mean some of it's confidence, some of it's seeing new things and I think what we found was that before the kids went they were...It hadn't really sunk in what they were doing. I think it more sunk in when they came back and certainly 'Kyle' found that the guys that went from his little team, when they've come back talking to their friends, that there's a sort of new credibility for them, that they went to Germany and they did this.*

### 3. Sporting excellence

*On being selected for the representative team the players were warned that their final inclusion on the trip was dependent on regular attendance at the special coaching sessions that 'Graham' was leading. Although these sessions were additional to the regular training commitments that players had for their local teams it was felt that they were a vital preparation for the game in Germany because the players had never played as a unit before and also because it was anticipated that the opposition would be very strong. Our team would play FC Union's under-19 squad, which suggested a team of individuals with potential professional capabilities. There was a certain level of anxiety amongst the staff that a huge defeat in the game would prove a dispiriting experience which could possibly have long-term negative consequences on the players' development and commitment ('Zadie' serves as a good example of how this can happen, his early commitment waned following a number of rejections following trials with professional and semi-pro clubs). Despite the rationale that underpinned the training sessions, and also repeated threats to non-attenders that their place on the trip was in jeopardy, the sessions were poorly attended. 'Graham', in particular, was extremely frustrated by this,*

*'I don't think they understand how lucky they are, God if I'd been given an opportunity like this at their age.....'*

*Perhaps the size of the challenge had not yet sunk in.*

*...Just before the game in question 'Graham' points to his flip chart. He talks through the tactics that the team should adopt. He says nothing of our earlier conversation with Henry, when he revealed that the opposition had been playing together as a team since the age of ten, that they trained together at least three times a week, that one of the players played for the national under-19 team. When Henry had told us all of this in his car, we had exchanged nervous glances. Earlier fears that our hastily assembled squad would be humiliated by an opposition with far superior skill and technical ability returned as a vision of an imminent*

and inevitable consequence of playing out a hopelessly mis-matched contest.

*'This isn't going to be easy but this is what we all came for. The 'big one'. None of you are ever likely to play a harder or more important game in your lives'.*

*'Graham' talks slowly and deliberately. He casts his eyes around the dressing room demanding from each of the players a nod of grave comprehension.*

*'We know that these guys are going to be good. But remember, each and every one of you are here on merit. You all deserve to be here.'*

*The players are subdued; individuals shuffle nervously and stare concertedly at the space between their feet.*

*'I don't want any one of you to get back to London and think, 'I could have done better'. Go out there and play as well as I know you can. Come away from this game with pride. It don't matter if we lose as long as we show them that we can play. I don't want no one saying that they were just a team of council estate cowboys. I know you can do it, you can do it. Go out there and enjoy yourselves. I know it seems a silly thing to say, after what I've just said but there ain't no point in any of us being here if we don't come away from it thinking that was a great experience.'*

*'Graham' had picked up the tempo at the last; he was now clapping his hands in rhythmic accompaniment to his uplifting words of encouragement and faith. In many ways it was typical of numerous pre-match talks witnessed and heard over the months and years of our research. The response from the players, however, was different. In more familiar surroundings you could rely on one or more to pick up on the sentiments of the manager and add their own rallying call for solidarity and self-belief, followed by a communal shout for victory. Now, everything was quiet. 'Sol' handed out shin-pads and jokes, regardless of which the team left the dressing room, as might a troop of condemned parvenus approaching the scaffold, which mocked their impossible ambitions.*



*Henry was keen to do everything properly. The two teams were called from their warm-up on the pitch to a position behind the sidelines so that they could line up together and follow the referee and two linesmen toward the centre-circle in the familiar tradition of professional international contests. The German team walked in file as they shook each of our player's hands in turn. A presentation was made by the German captain to his opposite number. 'Graham' put one hand on his head,*

*'I've stuffed that one up, haven't I?'. He waved over to Henry, who was stood a few yards away from us on the side of the pitch;*

*'Henry, we've got some medals to give your team, but we were going to do it at the end of the match'.*

*'It's not a problem', Henry reassured him unconvincingly.*

*Council estate wannabes embarrassed by an awful realisation that their weak grasp of etiquette and professionalism was being painfully exposed.*

*As the referee blew his whistle to start the game Graham joked without humour that if we lost by ten that it would be a 'result'. The Germans immediately set about their mission with a self-belief that suggested a rout was inevitable. The pre-match nerves of our own team now conspired to produce a hopelessly disjointed team effort whereby each individual player fell hopelessly out of position chasing long gone shadows. After ten minutes of relentless onslaught the Germans scored, they might easily have already scored three more. From the sidelines there was a terrible sense that the trip had been poorly thought out, that what was to follow in the next eighty minutes or so would serve only to humiliate and alienate an out-classed side of young Londoners.*

*It was difficult to know why they drifted back into position, why their self-belief came flooding back, why many of them started playing above and beyond themselves. The Germans still looked the better team but the margin of superiority visibly narrowed. 'Saz' scored an improbable goal after 'Joel' and 'Jay' combined to make a sublime run up the left side of the pitch. ...Trailing now by only 3-2 the team chased after an upset with a furious passion. Cruelly, with less than ten minutes of the game remaining, the Germans scored a fourth.*

*It seemed an incredible result, on paper at least. The Germans should have won by a country mile. The team were less enthusiastic about the result though.*

*'We could have won you know',*

*'They weren't all that',*

*'If 'Saz' hadn't been asleep...',*

*'That big striker was no way nineteen, have you seen him he's going bald'.*

*Other concerns were voiced, 'Saz' wanted to know if I had managed to get some good action shots of him during the game. 'Graham' commented that the reason they were so despondent was that they were only now beginning to realise what a big game they had been involved in and that they were disappointed with themselves because they felt that if they had put the extra work into preparing for it they may have won. 'Graham' gave an after-match talk, which attempted to lift flagging spirits;*

*'These guys have been playing together for years; you've come together in the last few weeks and put up a great battle. You've got to take the positive things away from this. You've got to go back home and build upon this. Say to yourselves this is what I've done and this is where I can go from now on. You should be proud of yourselves. You can look anyone in the eyes after today. Well done lads.'*

*'Kels' was less enthused;*

*'You could have done them today. It was your fitness. Young boys getting cramp. Back in the day you wouldn't have seen me and mine rolling on the floor like a pussy. You ain't fit man. When you get back to England you've got to get yourselves fit. You weren't playing for me and 'Sol' you were playing for yourselves. You gotta get fitter when you get home or you ain't gonna be moving on and developing.'*

*Both 'Graham' and 'Kels's' points were well received.*

*'Yeah man sometimes we were looking good but we were getting beaten too much, all it was was that they were stronger'.*

As we have suggested LOCSP are serious about their football and wider sporting activities. Whilst their programmes are intended to be inclusive, to engage regardless of ability, gender or age, the best are encouraged to excel. The staff set the tone, not through any desire to live out faltering youthful dreams of football stardom of their own on the back of the achievements of others but through their own determination to be better at what they do. The coaching staff are keen to develop their qualifications and broaden their experiences every bit as much as they seek to provide the opportunities for those they work with. 'Sol's' qualifications and work with the Arsenal academy is part of his own trajectory onto higher standards, just as 'Graham' was presented with the challenge to lead the team in Germany in response to his desire to stretch himself out of the sports development comfort zone.

The commitment to doing things right that this implies extends to all aspects of the Programme's work and was manifest in the desire to present the best possible image of LOCSP, the wearing of jackets and ties, the alcohol ban, the careful planning of rooming arrangements and the incandescence at failing to present a memento to their German opponents before the match. It is also reflected in the professionalism of the preparations, with structured training programmes, physiotherapy, tactical awareness, camaraderie and a variety of motivational tactics all geared towards achieving the best possible performances. This is not a Programme that believes in non-competitive sport, although there is a recognition that such activities have their place. Such an attitude would be irreconcilable with the backs to the wall mentality, which has sustained its development over the last fifteen years. It is an attitude born out of defiance, that estate kids and community programmes need not be second best, looked down upon.

Whilst sensitive and non-judgmental about those that come into contact with the Programme, from a sporting perspective such an attitude also demands discipline.

#### 4. Dealing with indiscipline

*In the week before the trip serious consideration was given to dropping some of the players who had failed to attend the additional training sessions that 'Graham' had put on for the travelling squad. In the end the practical and financial implications (eg. having to organise new players, book flights, arrange passports) of re-jigging the team were considered too onerous. Such considerations had not stood in the way of the restrictions imposed on the original choice of players however. 'Zadie' was not considered because although he had been one of the most committed and gifted players to have emerged from the Woodberry Down team, recent lifestyle changes, becoming a DJ, smoking, failing to turn up for training and matches were interpreted as inconsistent or indeed oppositional to the LOCSP ethos and was certainly not to be rewarded with a trip to Germany.*

*This 'tough love' was mobilised once and again throughout the trip as efforts were made to keep the team together, raise moral standards and protect the professional image of the organisation.*

*on the morning of the match 'Graham' is on the look out, concerned that two of the players had disappeared. He tells 'Sol' that he thinks he smelt smoke on one of their breath last night. 'Sol' and 'Graham' start to ask members of the team if they know where the two might be. Nobody seems to know, answers are vague and uninformative. 'Graham' leaves the hall to check bedrooms.*

*...Despite 'Graham's' fears and Henry's perennial and apparently inappropriate concerns over time keeping things held together relatively well over the course of the trip and when we arrived back at the airport Henry shook our hands and said goodbye.*

*'Let us hope that this is the beginning of a long relationship. You must come again to Berlin and next time you must stay for a longer time so that you can properly see our city'.*

*Henry left and we sat round waiting for check-in to begin. Players started to drift off to see what the airport had to offer by way of diversion and entertainment. 'Sol' and 'Ad' said that they would look after the bags, so the rest of us went to follow the others. Most of the team were in the restaurant. They were consulting the menus carefully and deciding what best their last Euros were spent on. Most opted for elaborate ice-cream sundaes.*

*'It just makes you remember that they're only kids really, for all the big talk they're just a bunch of kids'.*

*A group sat at the end of the table were drinking beer from large stein glasses, more surprisingly a couple of them were smoking. They sat with an air of nervous self-confidence; they spoke loudly about the game and about looking forward to getting back to London.*

*When we returned to the check-in queue 'Sol' was irritated.*

*'Thanks for coming back to let us go for some food. Don't worry about us we're alright. Selfish man.'*

*We stumbled apologies but felt that we had let them down. We moved through to passport control and the security checkpoints. Some of the lads who had been drinking beer started making loud jokes about who was trying to smuggle guns back to England. 'Graham' remonstrated with them, telling them that this was ill advised in the security obsessed world post 9/11, we might get delayed, they might get arrested. They remained boisterous and loud. 'Graham' walked over to 'Sol' and told him that he needed to 'have a word', that the boys had been drinking and needed calming down.*

*'Sol's' mood deteriorated. He pulled me to one side.*

*'Pat I need you to tell me who has been drinking, who was drinking with you. Fucking hell Pat it wasn't too much to ask not to drink and smoke in front of them'.*

*I'm crushed, I feel like a schoolboy receiving a dressing down for leading more impressionable friends into trouble.*

*'I can't give you names 'Sol', it's the research. They aren't ever going to trust me if I give their names.'*

*'Fuck the research, I've got a fucking job to do as well you know? Fucking hell Pat. I know who they all are; I just want you to say their names'.*

*'I can't do it 'Sol', it's the research', and as I say it I feel stupid and confused. As we argue two of the culprits pass by and 'Sol' calls them over. I walk away but watch as their faces squirm in discomfort at the verbal attack that 'Sol' is unleashing. Their earlier swagger instantaneously gone, the frailty of youth awkwardly exposed.*

*I slunk into the shadows and contemplated the ramifications of my fall out with 'Sol' from the standpoint of the research, whilst on a more personal and intimate level I felt that I had let somebody down who I had vast respect for. Is this how they feel when it happens to them? Is this part of 'Sol's' power?*

Some might criticise the sporting elements of LOCSP's work in Hargreaves terms<sup>41</sup> as representing a straightforward disciplinary regime which acts as a means of social control through the schooling of bodies to reproduce specific class, gender and ethnic divisions. However their approach resonates with many of those participants who stick with LOCSP, who recognise its value in broader terms than merely sport. As 'Jay' reflects:

Sometimes when you come training late he was like, go back, go home. So next time they know that to come training late I'm sure when they go for a job interview or anything like that, they'll know that things like this could happen anywhere else you know. It's not just about football. If you're late to a job interview they could say, oh sorry. They say you should come there at nine o'clock, you are coming there at ten past nine, that's no good so I don't think you're ready for this job, you're not the right man for this job. They'll send you away...So you learn from football and take it other places.

In some respects this account reflects a long tradition of no-nonsense discipline, collective values and anti-individualism within working class communities associated with the work ethic and principles of mutualism and collectivism that underpinned previous eras of working class organisation. As E. P. Thompson records in his seminal work on the history of the English working class:

...by the early years of the nineteenth century it is possible to say that collectivist values are dominant in many industrial communities; there is a definite moral code, with sanctions against the blackleg, the 'tools' of the employer or the un-neighbourly, and with an intolerance towards the eccentric or individualist... It is, indeed, this collective self-consciousness, with its corresponding theory, institutions, discipline, and community values which distinguishes the nineteenth-century working class from the eighteenth-century mob.<sup>42</sup>

With our contemporary times however comes a new celebration of diversity and relativism in which the market takes over from the State in producing willing consumers rather than obedient citizens. Football becomes a metaphor for the positively imbued social values that the 'healthy' majority claim as their own and which are wheeled out to the zones of exclusion in an effort to alter the behaviour and consciousness of 'risky' populations. It provides a means of educating those excluded from consumer society in 'our way of doing things', through resort to the cache of social and cultural capital that goes with contemporary sport.

### Key issues

The commitments to flexibility and credibility which underpin the engagement strategies of LOCSP are allied with a more conventional sporting discourse which places an emphasis on the need for discipline, 'good' behaviour, respect for others, an absence of foul language and the importance of listening. LOCSP's collective philosophy towards the management of sporting practice within its estate based projects can be considered in terms of the need for meticulous organisation, the provision of opportunities for social development, a professional commitment to sporting excellence and unforgiveness of indiscipline.

<sup>41</sup> Hargreaves, John (1986) *Sport, Power and Culture*, Cambridge: Polity Press

<sup>42</sup> Thompson, E. P. (1980) *The Making of the English Working Class*, Milton Keynes: The Open University, p.463

## Section 6. Final score: Conclusion and recommendations

### Sporting interventions: A framework for analysis

Earlier in this report we highlighted Andrew Scull's famous essay, *Community Corrections: Panacea, Progress or Pretence*<sup>43</sup> which sought to account for the fundamental shift in the basis of social control from the 1970s onwards. Here we adapt and refine Scull's model to offer a framework for assessment of the claims that could be made of the work of LOCSP in particular, and sporting interventions more generally. Ultimately, the three 'claims' of sporting interventions as representing a panacea, pretence or progress are considered with reference to six factors, namely:

- Sport;
- Community;
- Clients;
- The State;
- Social inclusion;
- Evidence.

Reflecting on the nature of the work we have presented in this report the reader is invited to consider certain characterisations that have been made of the relationship between 'claims' of impact and associated 'factors'. For example, when presented as a 'panacea', 'sport' is understood as 'non-problematic' and 'necessarily good', whilst under the 'pretence' claim, sport is seen as having incidental 'rhetorical power'.

*Table 4: Sporting interventions – panacea, pretence and progress*

	Panacea	Pretence	Progress
Sport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• non-problematic</li> <li>• necessarily good</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• rhetorical power</li> <li>• manipulable concept</li> <li>• incidental</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• beneficial</li> <li>• partial solution</li> </ul>
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• non-problematic</li> <li>• cohesive</li> <li>• romanticised</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• potentially problematic</li> <li>• in need of regulation</li> <li>• mystified</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• complex</li> <li>• fractured</li> <li>• in need of positive intervention</li> </ul>
Clients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• willing</li> <li>• malleable</li> <li>• redeemable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• problematic</li> <li>• in need of regulation</li> <li>• cost considerations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• complex</li> <li>• chaotic lifestyles</li> <li>• in need of more than sport</li> </ul>
The State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• benevolent</li> <li>• pro-active</li> <li>• progressive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• calculating</li> <li>• essentially regulatory</li> <li>• self-fulfilling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• potentially progressive</li> <li>• essentially political</li> <li>• re-active</li> </ul>
Social Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• obvious</li> <li>• automatic</li> <li>• speedy resolution</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• rhetorical power</li> <li>• unlikely</li> <li>• incidental</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• incredibly complex</li> <li>• long-term goal</li> <li>• sport's contributing role</li> </ul>
Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• easy to discern</li> <li>• short term evaluations</li> <li>• quantifiable outputs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cynically manipulated</li> <li>• legitimating</li> <li>• incidental</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• thorough research</li> <li>• long term</li> <li>• qualitative</li> </ul>

<sup>43</sup> Scull, A. (1983) 'Community Corrections: Panacea, Progress or Pretence' in Garland & Young (eds) *The Power to Punish* Heinemann Educational Books

It will be clear from this table that we are drawn towards the ‘progress’ perspective whilst recognising that none of the characterisations fully reflects the complexity of the relationships we have been exploring. As such, we wish to assert the fruitlessness associated with efforts to establish notions of ‘success’ in a context where funding partners and evaluators are seeking assessments, which are total, fixed and uncontentious. It is our assessment that given these complexities any honest evaluative framework will necessarily be partial, contingent and subjective. As will be clear from the preceding section no one example of work or life history fits neatly with any one of the claims presented here, as evidence of all three flows across the theoretical boundaries. Each of them is characterized by clashes, which enable them to be simultaneously advocated and refuted, illustrated and contradicted.

Having said this we assert that rather than accepting Scull’s ultimately pessimistic assessment of these claims it is important to understand their rhetorical force as organizing principles, or agents of change, upon which interventions are built. Whilst humanitarian ‘progress’ may not be universal, considerations of what constitutes ‘progress’, and aspirations to achieve it remain possible at both the organizational and individual level.

With these thoughts in mind we are convinced that LOCSP has produced a range of tactics, approaches and styles that can broadly be characterised as compatible with the progressive model illustrated in Table 4. In this final section we wish to offer some concluding thoughts on the basis of these approaches and the circumstances in which they are likely to lead to the most progressive outcomes.

### In search of respect

In the book *In Search of Respect* Phillipe Bourgois<sup>44</sup> seeks to create a bridge across the vast social distance between New York’s Upper East Side where he grew up and the Puerto Rican population of East Harlem by documenting the range of survival strategies of those at the extreme end of the marginalizing process, the crack dealers of El Barrio.

In his view, drugs and violence are seen merely as symptoms, or symbols of deeper changes in the culture of modern America. The actions of the young drug dealers he encountered are, for Bourgois, nothing more or less than an alternative forum for the personal dignity denied them by mainstream culture. In this sense they are portrayed as but one end of the continuum with the ordinary - neither passive victims nor glamorous gangsters - they are vulnerable active human beings, shaping their own future. That they ‘choose’ to do so outside of the framework of the ‘mainstream’ economy is regarded as an outcome of structural changes that deny such groups access to employment in ‘honourable’ productive work, closing off avenues to the ‘respect’ which underpins social relations. In this context, it is the drug economy, which provides the only ‘respectable’ alternative to the ameliorating effects of employment in the ‘entry level’ service sector with its limitless demand for fast food outlet attendants and office cleaners.

Similarly, in terms of the British ‘leisure’ sector, we might identify parallels between the positively regarded properties of sport and the perceived deleterious impact of drugs and crime. If sport is to be regarded as helping young people to learn to differentiate between good and bad behaviour we need to ask who’s definitions of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ behaviour we are relying on. Since, from an alternative perspective, drugs, crime and ‘deviant’ behaviour might be regarded as providing alternative routes to adventure and excitement to those provided by sport, whilst being motivated by the same mainstream values<sup>45</sup>. As such, in seeking to maintain a peaceful and contented state amongst socially excluded and often criminalised drug users, inappropriate interventions may well merely seek to replace the excitement, confrontations and violence associated with drugs and crime with a symbolic, ‘socially acceptable’ and less threatening alternative such as sport.

The targets of such interventions, themselves being ‘ordinary’, vulnerable, active human beings, shaping their own futures, are nevertheless in many cases attracted by the prospect of sport and its promise of physical, honourable, activity in a world where individuals seek to express a sense of identity and worth through their leisure.<sup>46</sup> It is our contention though that as long as interventions remain restricted to the level of ‘leisure’ activity, the impact will be necessarily fleeting, contingent and partial. In this sense whilst the sports experience and the expertise of those involved in facilitating it is vital, ultimately interventions are likely to have the most significant impact where relationships are formed around it and opportunities created through it for personal development, employment and training. As such the work that has emerged at LOCSP might be regarded as operating through the model of the ‘participatory community’.

<sup>44</sup> Bourgois, P. (2003) *In search of respect: Selling crack in El Burrio*, 2nd Edition

<sup>45</sup> Rojek, C. (2000) *Leisure & Culture*, Basingstoke: Macmillan

<sup>46</sup> Blackshaw, T. (2003) *Leisurelife: myth, masculinity and modernity*, London: Routledge

## Participatory community

In attempting to make some sense of the work of LOCSP (in terms of its broader significance and potential as a model for wider applicability) it is useful to consider the story of the Barlinnie Special Unit (BSU) and other innovations in penal design.<sup>47</sup> This is a rare (possibly unique) success story in the otherwise bleak history of the 'treatment model' of detention, where the proper function of the prison was seen to be to rehabilitate inmates. Opened in 1972 the Unit was primarily designed to segregate the most violent Scottish inmates from the mainstream prisoner population. Similar to the way in which contemporary 'exclusive society' seeks to essentialise and demonise problematic 'others', and consequently designs strategies to protect itself from these others – placing safe space between the included and the excluded – the Unit was conceived as a strategic attempt to marginalise and neuter those individuals who were regarded by the authorities as presenting a destabilising effect on the Scottish penal system.

To that extent there was nothing particularly new about the model. There had been many previous attempts to isolate the supposed bad apples from less 'diseased' inmates. However, immediately prior to the establishment of the BSU the most violent Scottish prison inmates were isolated in the notorious cages at Inverness prison where each prisoner was held in complete isolation. Housed in a cell within a cell (separated by iron bars) and denied any human contact (to the extent that food was passed to the inmate on the end of a metal pole). This model of absolute exclusion was shattered when the prisoners quite literally tore it apart. The prisoners burrowed through the partition walls and gathered in the final cell to confront the prison authorities in a horrifically violent refutation of an ideology that suggests it is possible to segregate society by the building of impermeable walls between the 'good' and the 'bad'. Afterwards prisoners were sent to trial on charges of attempted murder but this proved to be a spectacular public relations disaster for the authorities as it provided a public forum in which the inmates could talk about a brutal and oppressive system.

It was in this context of political confusion and sensitivity that the BSU was eventually launched. The authorities were sensitive to the worsening relations between the Prison Officers Union and the Government, and in order to minimise further conflicts the Scottish Prison Service ruled that only officers who volunteered for the BSU would have to work there. Those who ultimately volunteered can be seen as non-traditional agents of intervention in the same way that LOCSP workers differ from probation workers, policemen, teachers etc. The officers didn't wear uniforms and insisted that the inmates called them by their first names rather than 'Mr ...' as was usually the case. The inmates also did not wear uniforms. Within the unit the prisoners were allowed complete freedom of movement. Even though the unit now housed many of those who were involved in the Inverness confrontations (including the notorious Glasgow gangster Jimmy Boyle, referred to in those days as Scotland's most violent man) the inmates were allowed access to tools and other implements that could be used as weapons. Great emphasis was placed on encouraging the inmates to express themselves artistically (with Boyle becoming a renowned sculptor whose pieces sell for thousands of pounds).

The most innovative feature of the Unit were the weekly Monday morning meetings where staff and inmates discussed issues arising from individuals' behaviour and the future direction of the Unit. Everybody present had an equal say, memoirs from officers and inmates recount how this meeting allowed people to develop a sense of responsibility and become self-critical. Inmates released from the Unit confounded critics by not only just staying out of prison but becoming active community workers (Boyle established a successful crime diversion programme for young people in Edinburgh).

Whitmore's insider account of Barlinnie suggested that it allowed for the formation of therapeutic or truly 'participatory community'.<sup>48</sup> In other words the success of the Unit lay in the fact that non-traditional workers (who supposedly had a complete monopoly of power over the inmates) committed themselves to allowing the excluded opportunities to eventually re-integrate themselves within mainstream society. At the same time they encouraged the inmates to be truly reflexive, this enabled them to account for their own behaviour in a way which often involved them having to be critical of their own actions, and placing their individual actions in the context of how they helped or hindered the progressive development of the Unit as a whole. From this, Young contests, a truly collective conscience emerged.

<sup>47</sup> Smith, R. (1984) *The State of the Prisons. Grendon, the Barlinnie Special Unit and the Wormwood Scrubs Annexe: experiments in penology*, British Medical Journal, Vol. 288

<sup>48</sup> Whitmore, P. (1987) *Barlinnie special unit: A insider's view*, in A. Bottoms & R. Light (Eds.) *Problems of Long-term Imprisonment*, Aldershot: Gower

The point here is not that the individuals who come into contact with LOCSP are in any way pathological, in need of some special programme of behaviour modification. Rather that just as the inmates in Barlinnie benefited from an intervention which provided a space in their life away from the traditional distinctions of 'inclusion'/'exclusion', 'good'/'bad' so the young men who play and train with LOCSP are given respite from the daily grind of contemporary exclusionary processes. Indeed, recent ethnographic studies of the American 'underclass' such as Bourgois' reinforce the point that rather than the 'excluded' being different from 'us', with different cultural values and normative frameworks, they have an over-developed thirst to attain the cultural goals of mainstream society.

In the context of interventions with those who have come to be understood as 'socially marginalised', 'excluded' and potentially criminogenic, LOCSP's most 'successful' interventions might be considered in relation to the more organic development of this model by the Delancy Street Foundation in San Francisco. Founded in 1972 by a former heroin addict, the Foundation is a place to learn and put to use viable social skills. Its founder, John Maher, with the help of the criminologist Mimi Silbert slowly built a 'participatory community' of former convicts and drug addicts who live together, teach together and work together. The residents function as a family, earning their own incomes while contributing to the overall success of the programme as a whole. It is underpinned by the following features:

- Residents' commitment to the programme;
- Self image enhanced through appearance and 'good living';
- All residents held responsible for choice and actions and must work to acquire privileges;
- Goal of self-improvement as well as the good of the group;
- Mandatory community service and caring for others in a manner that promotes family pride;
- Self-discipline is expected with pressure exerted to keep the community running smoothly;
- Risk-taking and positive change encouraged and supported;
- Community owned and resident-operated business with a \$6 million income.

These features, which can also be identified in the work of the Carlton Athletic drug and alcohol project in Glasgow, resonate with many of the principles which guide LOCSP's approach even if the organisation generally works with those at the 'softer' end of the social exclusion spectrum. Whilst no residential 'community', LOCSP does generate a familial environment whose values and goals are extended outside the core staff team to the participants in its programmes. The greatest impact being experienced by those participants who ultimately take on coaching and developmental roles with the organisation, or learn the skills to take LOCSP's approach elsewhere. The point being that these participants are not pathological others in need of a 'cure' but that because of wider exclusionary processes they have been put out of reach of traditional intervention agencies. When innovative methods are utilised and 'spaces' created we discover that the 'excluded' are just like 'us', just with more limited chances.

### Key issues

There is a fruitlessness associated with measuring 'success' and 'failure' in a context where funding partners and evaluators are seeking assessments that are total, fixed and uncontentious. LOCSP has produced a range of tactics, approaches and styles, which can broadly be characterised as 'progressive'. Ultimately interventions are likely to have the most significant impact where relationships are formed around it and opportunities created through it for personal development, employment and training. As such the work that has emerged at LOCSP might best be regarded as operating through the model of the 'participatory community'.

## Recommendations

Ultimately, in terms of the presentation of LOCSP as a 'model' agency in this sector, we have identified that it:

- Demands organisational flexibility and innovation;
- Provides the potential rather than any guarantee of generating positive outcomes;
- Is necessarily part of a process of social and community development which is never complete and which always has the potential for relapse;
- Has the greatest impact upon those who engage with the organisation's inner 'community' and guiding principles;
- Is underpinned by an egalitarian, non hierarchical organisational structure;
- Relies upon its staff's ability to present themselves as realisable 'role models';
- Gains credibility through its perceived authenticity in the eyes of participants and funders;
- Depends upon the capacity of its coaches to both engage with target populations through an intimate awareness of local cultural forms and style and to deliver sporting excellence.

In relation to these findings in this final passage we seek to draw out a series of key messages relating to the delivery and management of sports based social development projects, which might help to guide those responsible for identifying and funding agencies to 'do' this type of work.

### *Back to the office...*

1. It should be recognised that, other things being equal, there are considerable advantages to be gained in terms of working with an agency with voluntary or charitable rather than statutory status. Voluntary and community agencies are in a much stronger position to attract additional funding from a range of other sources, particularly in areas that have been identified as in need of investment. Voluntary and community agencies are also in a stronger position to work with participants across political and geographical boundaries.

**Evidence:** Many of LOCSP's early estate based interventions were small scale with limited budgets, such as the Drug Challenge Fund project which spawned the Eastside team, but went on to attract additional funds from a variety of public and private sector sources, enabling expansion of the organisation's expertise out across the East of London.

2. In this light it is always worth considering, even when a good proposal is received, whether there might be a better, more credible and flexible agency to fund than the applicant. This is not to say that the original applicant would not have an important role in the delivery of a proposed project but just that it might not be the lead agency. Funders should encourage partnership in such circumstances and flexibility in acknowledging the track record of other agencies and be prepared to direct applicants towards appropriate partners.

**Evidence:** LOCSP staff have been demonstrably more successful in engaging with young people on estates targeted by social intervention programmes than more conventional statutory representatives.

3. In this respect funders should also be concerned about the experience that agencies have in terms of delivering sports based social inclusion projects and their willingness to engage with partners where there are identified weaknesses and gaps in that experience. Equally where there is an identified lack of experience, funders should be willing to back innovative ideas and committed organisations with smaller grants. In this regard it is important to ensure that project proposals are realistic and achievable with the available funds.

**Evidence:** LOCSP has always been willing to bring in external expertise - in terms of drug education specialists etc. - where staff have not been confident in their capacity to deliver certain aspects of a programme. In turn this has led to identification of weaknesses in the programme portfolio which have then been addressed through staff recruitment, development and training. LOCSP also began working on social inclusion projects by securing a series of small grants in the region of £5,000. From this they gained the experience and confidence to deliver more substantial programmes.

4. In a similar vein it is also important that agencies have the confidence of potential partners and collaborators and that they are not seen to be replicating existing programmes of work. Ideally sports programmes should form one element of a broader social development programme, which involves agencies that are able to identify and refer young people, but also agencies that can provide exit routes into the 'mainstream'.

**Evidence:** Other statutory and voluntary bodies including local authorities across East London and health authorities, increasingly approach LOCSP and mainstream government funding sources to take the lead or participate in social development programmes.

5. If agencies are to have credibility with their target audience it is important that they are accessible not only at the point of delivery but also in terms of their administrative centre. Parents and enthusiastic participants should be able to contact the organisation at other times than when coaches are delivering sessions on estates, both in terms of good professional practice and as a means of strengthening relationships.

**Evidence:** LOCSP's office is located in the heart of Leyton at a well-known venue where the public is welcome to wander in. As well as seeking out information on courses visitors are encouraged to hang around and make use of the magazine rack. The space has more of the feel of a 'boot room' than a corporate office and gives off an air of what the organisation is about. Several members of staff have been recruited following uninvited visits and the office plays regular host to young people on work experience, whilst team members often meet up there before and after matches which has contributed to their familiarity with the organisation and transition onto the coaching staff.

6. In this respect it is vital that agencies can be recognisably effective 'cultural intermediaries', able to operate equally comfortably in the worlds of their participants and in the wider domain of 'professional practice'. The role of the agents of social inclusion is to provide gateways between these worlds and as such funders should look for evidence that agencies have the staff resources to engage with target groups but also of their ability to open up pathways into employment and training. The most effective agencies may be those who can demonstrate that they are also able to share their learning with others working in the field.

**Evidence:** Whilst LOCSP staff have demonstrated a capacity to engage with young people in disadvantaged communities and, more particularly, those individuals identified by other agencies as being 'most at risk', they have also developed their own Open College Network courses and consistently helped participants to pursue other employment and training options. Beyond this, LOCSP staff are consistently represented and indeed often lead local partnerships, forums, conferences and training events.

7. In the face of the damage that can be done by 'parachute' projects which raise expectations only to ultimately let down those engaged by the prospect of a new challenge, agencies must show a long term commitment to provision which rejects the time-budget model. Whilst acknowledging that specific funding awards will always be limited to a specified time period, applicants must show a commitment to extending provision indefinitely. In this regard applicants need to indicate their succession funding strategy in all applications. Whilst a project may seek to assimilate participants back into the wider neighbourhood, mainstream services and opportunities this should not be regarded as an acceptable starting assumption.

**Evidence:** On all of the estates LOCSP has worked on, there has never been a perception that participants, as a group, have been successfully integrated into mainstream provision and as such programmes have always been extended to ensure continuity and that individual progression routes are maintained.

### *Back to the 'community'...*

1. Beyond the rhetoric there remains no definitive evidence of a link between participation in sport and generic positive social outcomes. As such funders should be wary of organisations that make claims to this effect. Rather, project aims should be grounded in their capacity to deliver and links should be made between objectives and assessment. Claims that are likely to remain unsubstantiated should be avoided even at the expense of ambition. Given the problems associated with unrealistically heightening ambitions, objectives should focus on the realistic and deliverable.

**Evidence:** LOCSP has learned to understand that when working with groups classified as ‘socially excluded’, engagement must be regarded as an end in itself. Assessment can then be made through the success in engaging target groups in activities and maintaining their contact.

2. It is important to recognise the distinction between sports development projects - including sports projects targeted at socially marginalised groups - and sports based social development projects. Projects, which engage young people in sport, whilst not addressing the range of issues raised in this report, can still be worthwhile projects. Equally social development projects that do not have fixed, coherent development plans in place may still be effective in meeting project aims. Assessment needs to relate project objectives to project outcomes rather than the rhetoric of social inclusion.

**Evidence:** Alongside its estate based projects LOCSP has run a highly successful girls and women’s football development programme that has engaged significant numbers of women into participation in football as well as producing some players of outstanding quality.

3. Funders should question why and by whom projects were conceived and the extent to which plans have been based on local knowledge. In the midst of the perception of sport and football as a panacea there is the potential for areas to be identified and solutions assigned without adequate consideration of needs.

**Evidence:** LOCSP have been asked to work on estates where minimal investigation revealed that local residents were already running 10 football teams and training sessions 5 nights a week on a voluntary basis. Replication would only have been likely to generate hostility and disengagement.

4. Similarly it is important to question whether project plans are too prescriptive. Where programmes have been planned in too detailed a fashion or based upon an external model implemented in a location with different local conditions it may not reflect the more organic nature of successful community development work. Successful projects are likely to be professional but flexible, long term and open ended with a recognition that changes will be incremental and uneven.

**Evidence:** In the 2001 LOCSP annual review the Director recalled that the best memory of the year had been when 47 of the Eastside squad organised their own training session in the park because they decided that they were not fit enough.

5. Funders should be concerned with where projects are to be delivered. Whilst some projects may seek to raise their credibility and attractiveness through identification of state of the art facilities, however limited, estate based resources represent the best place to start any intervention and to maintain credibility and entry-level access to estate residents. At the same time it is important to identify accessible facilities of a higher standard for future use so that teams can be organised and enabled to progress into competitive structures.

**Evidence:** Despite running 27 football teams LOCSP continues to organise estate based football-training sessions on a daily basis throughout the week.

6. Whilst interventions of this type necessarily need to remain flexible at the micro as well as the macro planning level it is vital to investigate the basic parameters of football development strategies. Short-term football coaching programmes will not be successful in terms of a social development strategy. As interventions of this type are built around the opportunity to make contact and build relationships they cannot be time bound or skill development driven. As such, what is important is the provision of a variety of individually tailored pathways that enable participants to fulfil their potential or explore other avenues for personal development.

**Evidence:** In addition to its provision of Open College Network courses and other training and employment opportunities, LOCSP is able to augment its estate based work by providing access to an extensive network of teams and contacts with other clubs suitable for all levels of ability and commitment.



## Postscript: An update from 'Ad'

On the Eastside was researched and written between 2001 and 2003. At the time we were, on reflection, experiencing a great period of change and development which is captured wonderfully in the piece.

Our starting point was always that we wanted to undertake some meaningful qualitative research which would understand and highlight the dynamics, challenges and impact of our organisation and the work that we do. It was not intended as a blue print or a 'how to' guide to running community sports organisations but does offer some fascinating insights into all of the elements that are required.

Following the chronology of the story a few of the main characters moved on; firstly 'Sol', in 2005, went to join the David Beckham Academy, 'Grant' left in 2007 to manage the Tottenham Hotspur Foundation and 'Graham' went onto manage a project at West Ham United in 2008. Interestingly all joining organisations that reflect the rapid growth of the community sports sector over the past ten years. As with the departure of Neil Watson in June 2002 they proved hard to replace, reflecting the 'x' factor that dynamic and innovative organisations require and the fortune we had in having the right people in the right place at the right time.

Both 'Kev' and I are still with LOCSP having taken up senior positions and subsequently been joined by a whole new generation of interesting characters who now shape and drive the organisation.

Our commitment to delivery and development and our focus on supporting young people realising their potential remains undiminished. We have been lucky to find like minded partners and have expanded our work into Newham and Redbridge as well as deepening our work in the other London boroughs discussed in the report. We therefore remain on the estates described in the research and face many of the same challenges and issues, but always with a smile and with hope.

Our work continues to be varied, including everything from coaching in nurseries through to pensioner workouts with a strong focus on the specific needs of our local communities of interest and neighbourhood including pioneering work with the faith communities and those suffering with mental health issues. We also specialise in delivering 'alternative educational provision' where groups of Year 11 pupils who are out of school come to us all day every day for the academic year, gaining qualifications, volunteering and moving on to college – a major achievement given their starting points. As we continue to push boundaries this type of project has proven challenging but rewarding and has demanded the development of new skills by our staff who have to work so intensely with the young people.

In May 2005 we moved from our 'hotel' in the South Stand to take up offices in the SCORE building which after six long years of discussion, design and development finally opened. Since then it has firmly established itself as the community, health and sports hub for our local area. As well as being a base for over thirty sports clubs and community groups it also attracts wider patronage and profile. It is also a focal point for a number of our regular activities as well as the bigger events that we and others organise, bridging the gap between the community and professionals. It is now well connected to the preparations for the Olympics, being used regularly as a conference and event venue and a games time training venue in 2012.

Although not physically having office space in the Football Club any longer we maintain strong relationships with the Club which has included opening an Education Centre in the West Stand in 2006 (which doubles up as a Match day Media Centre), running the Boys Centre of Excellence from 2004-2007 and, in the past two years, supporting a part time Community Liaison Officer employed by the Club who focuses on match day activities, player visits and Club Community days.

Being the first football in the community scheme to become a charity in 1997, we have watched with growing interest how not only our approach to the work but our preferred governance structure has been replicated across the country. The creation of the Football League Trust (itself a charity) in 2007 and the introduction of quality marking has led to an exponential rise in the number of charitable community schemes which currently number 56. Of those, 37 reported £21 million of funding in the last financial period. The Premier League Clubs provide a 18 more registered charities and Foundations who between them they are generating a further £16 million.

Much of this funding has though come as a result of direct or indirect central and local government investment. Accordingly, with a changing political and financial climate the sector faces significant challenges, but as one door closes another opens. The growing emphasis on the need for the voluntary and community sector to come forward and take a lead on service delivery as part of the Government's Big Society agenda will provide new opportunities, particularly for those organisations who can be open about their work and the impact it has had.

It is in this context that the publication of this research is so timely. It will add a dimension to the debate about the potential of the sector and the critical issues relating to sustainability, styles of delivery, drive, innovation and the need to demonstrate results and value which we all need to grapple with afresh if we are to make a long term difference.

I would like to thank the research team for their original endeavours and to the team at Substance for their continuing interest and support in helping us capture the story of our work since 2005 through the Substance Project Reporting System and for publishing and promoting this invaluable report.

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