

## A Process of Separate Development?

The arguments for and against ‘single identity funding’ are not unique to sport (see for example NACVS Paper on Single Identity Funding on the Institute’s website [www.cohesioninstitute.org.uk](http://www.cohesioninstitute.org.uk)) and are not entirely straightforward. In the short term at least, it has often proved easier to engage with different groups on their own ground (or within their own comfort zones), with people from a similar background. It can also be argued, historically at least, that this has been necessary (see Appendix ‘Black Team, White League’). More generally, the need for ‘capacity building’ within a particular community, so that they can perhaps compete on an equal basis, and especially in respect of new migrant groups, is difficult to argue against. However, once established on that basis, it seems as though it can be even harder to develop common programmes subsequently and the arrangements quickly become institutionalised.

Furthermore, the separate development on the playing field appears to make it even more difficult to challenge other areas of sports development and management. For example, the progression into higher level coaching and management structures, and inclusion of minorities in the governance arrangements, has generally failed to develop where it has simply been based on single identity groups.

“Sports policy in Britain, which traditionally focused upon the dual strands of increasing participation and raising performance levels, has begun to shift towards viewing the potential benefits and impacts of sport in more holistic and cross-cutting ways”

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However, a number of new and more challenging approaches and schemes are beginning to emerge (again, see Section 4) and football is again leading the way. For example, the Community Cohesion Focus/Awaaz project in Hounslow, which brought together South Asian and Somalian communities from central Hounslow, with communities from the west of the borough, which are predominantly white. It aimed to break down the lack of social mixing, tolerance and understanding which had been reflected in local schools. Similarly, West Ham United Football Club, in partnership with the London Borough of Tower Hamlets is at the forefront of a pioneering project to improve participation in football, in deprived, inner city, multicultural areas. It is open to all children in the Borough regardless of ethnicity, gender or disability; although targeting young Asian players is a key objective given their past low representation.

Targeting of groups, within a wider multicultural perspective, may offer a compromise between single identity funding and cross-cultural provision, though care will obviously need to be taken to ensure that schemes remain genuinely multicultural.

The targeting of groups, which have a history of conflict with a view to defusing hostility and tension, have also been undertaken. The Maimonides Foundation, a joint Jewish-Muslim interfaith organisation, which fosters understanding, dialogue, and co-operation between Jews and Muslims, has an active education programme which runs a number of projects and events for young people of Jewish and Muslim faith. They create forums where the two communities can share their commonalities and discuss their differences through dialogue. The Foundation has used both art and football as ‘universal languages’ to begin develop fraternal relations between Britain’s 275,000 Jews and 1.5 million Muslims, bringing together people from those communities, some of whom have never previously met anyone from the other community. One of their most high profile events is the annual Interfaith Football Programme, at which over 120 Jewish and Muslim students between the ages of 9-12 take part in a football tournament in mixed faith teams.

However, schemes in other sports such as cricket and golf, are also beginning to emerge, such as the Saltaire Cricket Club in Bradford, which was founded in 1869 and has re-invented itself as a multicultural club over the last five years or so. Interestingly, their success has been based more on changing the social, rather than the sporting, dimensions of the club, a view reflected in the Hounslow Focus/Awaaz project. (see both schemes in section 4). Bradford has similarly championed multicultural development in other sports like golf, though mixed teams are still difficult to achieve.

Multi-sports activities are also able to attract a diverse range of participants, for example the Haringey Warriors Youth Organisation (HWYO) summer sports camp, 2005, which, utilised funding from London & Quadrant Housing Association, Haringey Council’s Youth Services and Neighbourhood Management.