



A QUEST FOR CHANGE

THE BAME FOOTBALL FORUM (BFF)
FORWARD PLAN

The BAME Football Forum

HELPING TO CREATE NEW OPPORTUNITIES

This strategic plan sets out the BAME Football Forum priorities and main areas of work.

Football is a game played by many people of all ages up and down the Country, so it's no wonder that decisions made in the football world, inevitably impact communities locally.

From a grassroots viewpoint, there is a year on year increase in reported incidents of discrimination in football, a virtually non-existent South Asian contingency of players in the professional game and a lack of Black managers across the English Leagues. These mainstream issues are the tip of the iceberg and at a grassroots level, the impact is arguably greater, with the issues affecting many more people from vulnerable communities.

As a Forum, we echo the FA's Equality and Inclusion Plan 2018-21 'In Pursuit of Progress' report¹ where it talks about the grassroots workforce, supporting inclusion and diversity, and states, 'Despite our individual differences, one thing should never be different – the game is FOR ALL'.

We must uphold these same sentiments when searching for solutions to create equality in football, specifically around race. To deliver the future we require in the game, there must be true accountability and a culture change from the board room to the grass root.

Ivan Liburd
Chair of the BAME Football Forum

“
The BAME Football Forum is a fantastic initiative driven by local community grassroots football clubs, and intends to provide support to each other through networking and partnership working; as well as being a critical friend to football decision makers.
”

¹ FA's Equality and Inclusion Plan 2018-21 'In Pursuit of Progress'

BUILDING FROM THE GRASSROOTS UPWARDS

WHO WE ARE

The BAME football Forum (BFF) is a partnership of grassroots clubs and community members that have been formed to develop a network of support. Whilst enriching our understanding of the impact of football practices, we will share and gain insights into the potential drivers for change.

The aim of the forum is to help, promote, support and encourage the development and progression of BAME football, thereby ensuring the broader needs of the football community are met.

OUR APPROACH

The BFF will act as a beacon for any BAME clubs as well as a central point for football bodies to communicate key strategies and initiatives locally. This type of forum is one of the first of its kind anywhere across the Country and has already created a unity on key issues pertinent to all BAME football clubs and wider.

We will work closely with those that make decisions which affect the football community including Local and National Football Associations, Local Authorities, Funding Bodies, Charities, Campaign groups, the Police, community groups and others that seek positive outcomes for the betterment of our communities.

“The BAME Football Forum (BFF) is an inclusive group and welcomes the approaches and conversations from all establishments”

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

We have identified 4 strategic aims which need our attention.

Our overarching strategic aim is Communication and Transparency, which runs through all 4 aims.

Communication & Transparency

- 1

Training and Mentoring
To create opportunities by working in partnership with stakeholders to increase educational pathways and supported learning.
- 2

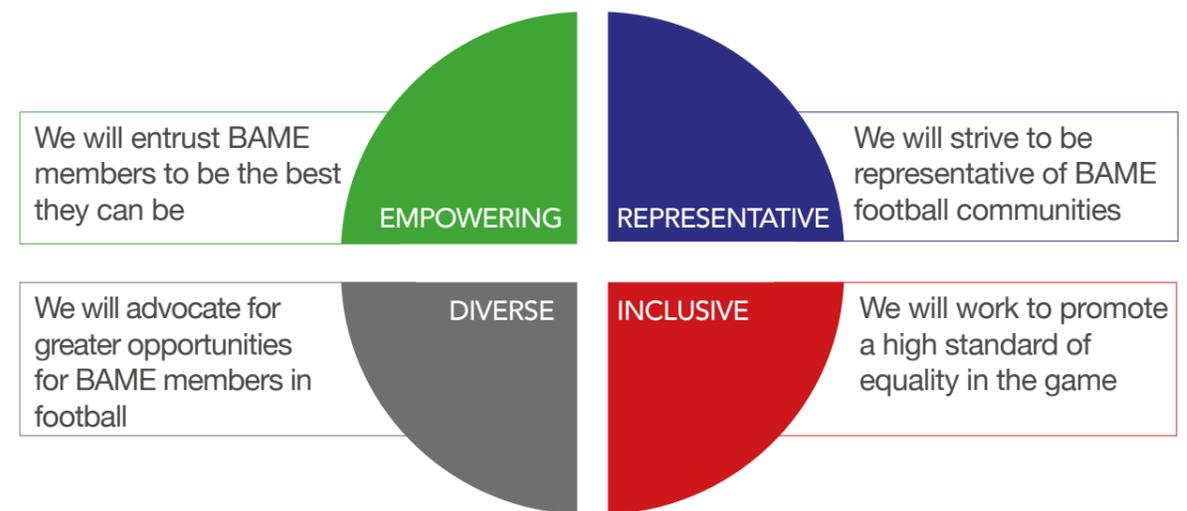
Facility and Resource
To increase the efficiency and targeting of resources into BAME football clubs, including the further development and need for greater facilities.
- 3

Equality and Community
To address the issues of equality in football that are affecting BAME football clubs and the wider community.
- 4

Policy and Governance
To better understand the decision making processes that govern football in order to ensure that they are fully inclusive and represent the needs of BAME clubs.

OUR VALUES

When working to achieve our aims, we will be guided by our values.



WORKING FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

OUR PRIORITIES

The BFF has developed a set of four key strategic aims with an overarching aim that will allow us to have a focus on achieving lasting change within BAME football.

1 TRAINING & MENTORING

Developing role models in all areas of the game is the ideal in order to encourage greater involvement and aspirations. Encouraging career development and a higher standard of coaching through formal and informal routes, provides greater flexibility for learning. Football authorities and professional clubs have a role to play in facilitating these pathways.

The BFF will create opportunities by working in partnership with stakeholders to increase educational pathways and supported learning.

We will encourage the development of coaches and staff by:

- Working in partnership with stakeholders to provide learning opportunities
- Helping to develop appropriate pathways of progression
- Showcasing the career opportunities within football

2 FACILITY & RESOURCE

The distribution of facilities and resources across BAME clubs has long been a topic of discussion, especially where a higher standard of facility is concerned. Having the facility to develop and provide a consistency for players is key. At a grassroots level, there are many financial restraints that ultimately restrict the ability and development of players and clubs. Having a strategy at a local level, which moves beyond participation and looks to include excellence, would provide a whole pathway for varying abilities.

The BFF will work to increase the efficiency and targeting of resources into BAME football clubs, including the further development and need for greater facilities.

We will work with funding bodies by:

- Consulting on local and national funding strategies
- Sharing club insights and highlighting local need
- Developing pilot programmes that benefit local clubs

3 EQUALITY & COMMUNITY

In this age of football, the idea that players or communities are held back or treated differently purely down to their gender or race is a barbaric mentality that is still being conducted. The discriminatory issues that were being discussed 30 years ago are still being discussed today and for many issues, there needs to be a line drawn in the sand. This pattern of inequality and obvious or surreptitious discrimination remains a stain on the game; and for the benefit of those that participate, there must be a stronger and more direct approach to change, with accountability.

To address the issues of equality in football that are affecting BAME football clubs and the wider community.

We will help to remove barriers by:

- Raising awareness and challenging inequality and discrimination in football
- Providing opportunities for governing bodies to engage with local clubs and communities
- Working with equality groups nationally in order to impact change locally

4 POLICY & GOVERNANCE

Understanding the fragmentation of governance between various Leagues, the National FA, the Local FA's and the Premier League; and how they all work towards the betterment of the sport is a continuing debate. At a grassroots level, understanding exactly who devises the processes and policies for clubs to abide by, and if they consistent across all establishments, can be confusing. Having a better understanding of current ways of working as well as an opportunity to represent the interests of BAME clubs is necessary, especially because in many cases, representation is not consistent.

To better understand the decision making processes that govern football in order to ensure that they are fully inclusive and represent the needs of BAME clubs.

We will work with governing bodies by:

- Inputting into national policy changes and consultations
- Increasing representation of BAME involvement
- Reviewing processes that are harmful to local clubs

COMMUNICATION & TRANSPARENCY

Building better practices to share information proactively, will open up new opportunities for greater engagement with grassroots clubs. Although more transparency may bring greater scrutiny, it will also provide an avenue for reflective learning and greater accountability.

Communication and transparency is an overarching objective that cuts across all other objectives and is absolutely vital when working towards any system improvements.



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