



Federation of Stadium Communities

# 'Reaching the Community'

Interim Report 3

April 2006 to March 2007



# Reaching the Community

## Year Two Report

April 2006 to March 2007

### 1. Background

#### *Federation of Stadium Communities*

The FSC is a national charity which represents the interests of communities living in vicinity of major sports stadia. Established in 1991, the FSC exists to help to improve and build mutually beneficial relationships between sports clubs and their neighbouring communities.

The FSC works to improve the quality of life for stadium communities, by exploring ways in which sports clubs and community groups can work together to develop innovative projects, initiatives and partnerships which help to address local inequalities in health, learning and employment opportunities, to promote economic and environmental regeneration and minimise any negative impact due to the activities of the stadium.

The FSC provides information, advice and support and highlights and shares examples of good practice.

### 2. The Project

Reaching the Community (RtC) is a unique West Midlands based pilot project which seeks to improve the quality of life in stadium neighbourhoods by helping and supporting sports clubs to better engage with their neighbouring communities, local authorities, health agencies and community and voluntary organisations.

The 5 year project which began in April 2005 is funded by the Football Foundation with match funding to the project for years 2 and 3 from the LankellyChase Foundation.

The project aims to support sports clubs to better understand the needs of their neighbouring communities and help's them to work in partnership with local organisations to develop mutually beneficial projects and initiatives, which use the resources, facilities and the power of sport and the club 'badge' to address local inequalities in health, learning, employment and the environment and to help combat social exclusion.

The project will identify the barriers preventing sports clubs from maximising their potential community engagement and recommend, facilitate and develop measures designed to allow clubs to address and overcome those barriers. Where necessary, the project will seek to improve the existing relationships between sports clubs and their neighbours, by facilitating the establishment of effective dialogues between clubs, communities, authorities

and other agencies and through this dialogue seek to resolve issues relating to the negative impact caused by the activities of the sports club.

The project will encourage and facilitate partnership working that will:

- Develop stadia as centres which provide integrated cultural, sporting, health and educational services and use the power of sport to increase participation in such services by 'hard to reach' groups
- Create an understanding and responsive environment that can attract sustainable and mutually beneficial income streams
- Develop a process for the on-going involvement of all local communities in decision making in relation to community opportunities presented by stadia

The project will initially target 18 sports clubs including football, cricket and rugby clubs, however further clubs may be added as the project develops. The target clubs are:

- AFC Telford United
- Aston Villa
- Bromsgrove Rovers
- Birmingham City
- Coventry City
- Kidderminster Harriers
- Hereford United
- Port Vale
- Shrewsbury Town
- Stafford Rangers
- Stoke City
- Walsall
- West Bromwich Albion
- Wolverhampton Wanderers
- Worcester City
- Warwickshire CCC
- Worcester CCC
- Worcester RUFC

### **3. Engagement Tools**

The development of innovative engagement tools is a key aspect of RtC. The tools developed will allow clubs to begin to engage more substantially with community groups and key stakeholders and will allow them to develop or further develop relationships with partner organisations.

#### **Stadium City (A Port Vale & Stoke City FC Joint Project)**

- Management of the Stadium City project, including liaison between partners, schools and film makers, advice and support to film makers, arranging filming locations, managing budget, organisation of launch event.
- Participation in planning and ideas generating events as well as 'X-Factor' style pitching day.

The Stadium City project has been developed in partnership between Creative Partnerships Stoke-on-Trent, the Federation of Stadium Communities, the BBC Stoke, Port Vale FC, Stoke City FC, St Thomas More Catholic High School and Haywood High School. The project is funded by Creative Partnerships Stoke-on-Trent with substantial in-kind contributions from the other partners. The £30,000 project has been managed as part of the RtC project.

The project used Ports Vale FC and Stoke City FC as creative settings to engage the imagination of young people and explore issues of cultural and civic identity.

The project allowed 30 year 9 students at two schools close to the two stadia the opportunity to express ideas inspired by their perceptions of the stadia and the City of Stoke-on-Trent as short films. Ideas for the films were developed through ideas generation workshops facilitated by Staffordshire University and the Women and Theatre group. The ideas were then presented to a panel of judges in an 'X Factor' style event. Representatives on the Panel included Creative Partnerships, the FSC and the BBC. The students then worked in groups of six with professional film-makers, to produce a total of ten 2 minute short films which were broadcast over a week on local BBC TV.

The 10 films, with input from the students, were then edited together into one feature, which was shown at a film première, presented by young people from each school, at the local museum film theatre and all the young people involved received 'Stadium City' trophies and free tickets to a Port Vale match of their choice, presented by Port Vale's Chairman.

The evaluation of the project took the form of a series of filmed interviews with the young people involved in the production of the films. This footage together with footage of the launch event and evaluation from the film makers and partners has been edited together into one final film. This will be used as a best practice tool in order to develop similar projects elsewhere and highlight the many creative ways stadia can be used to benefit and inspire young people.

## **Talking Balls**

- Co-ordination and promotion of venues for the Talking Balls performance

Talking Balls is collaboration between RtC and the 'Women and Theatre' theatre company. The project consists of a collection of performed monologues exploring a wide range of men's health issues & concerns including testicular & prostate cancer, infertility, sexually transmitted infections and any other issues that arise from the research.

Women & Theatre artists have worked closely with staff and fans at the stadia as well as other men of varied ages & backgrounds and health professionals in the research and development of the piece. The piece will be performed by professional actors and accompanied by a facilitated post-show discussion to encourage audiences to discuss the issues raised and receive accurate information and resources.

Health professionals will be present to answer specific medical questions. The programme will entertain, raise awareness of specific men's health issues and allow people to make informed choices about their own health.

The project is being run at 9 clubs within the West Midlands including, AFC Telford, Aston Villa, Coventry, Kidderminster, Shrewsbury, Walsall, West Bromwich Albion, Wolverhampton Wanderers and premiering at Port Vale.

The project has been particularly successful in developing relationships between clubs and supporters groups, where relationships were difficult.

## **Extra Time**

Extra Time is an initial means of engaging with traditionally 'hard to reach' learners, in particular males. The learning project is designed to capture and celebrate, the stories of former players, their families, supporters and people living in the neighbourhood of football clubs from the 1950s to 1980s.

The project features a series of reminiscence events at football clubs bringing former players, supporters and school pupils together to discuss themes including, food, training, kit, travel, media, careers and wages, links and impact on local lives and the area. The events will be recorded using a variety of means, audio, visual, written and art.

The events will be incorporated into school education modules, including the history and sport curriculum. Materials produced through the project will be exhibited and disseminated both locally and regionally.

Initial sessions will include 10 -15 young people and 10 older people sharing and discovering information. Follow up sessions will build relationships and further learning.

A series of 'taster' activities has already been undertaken at Port Vale FC. Former players, their families and Year 9 pupils of a local school, took part in workshops to produce a DVD of stories and memorabilia, leading to a successful Heritage Lottery bid for a 2 year project entitled '*Port Vale Tales*'. The project will bring together and make accessible, archive material, share and celebrate memories and stories of former players, their families and local people and engage all generations in sharing local heritage and offer learning opportunities for older and younger people.

## **Healthy Stadia**

The concept of Healthy Stadia has become a core part of the FSC's work and is now being used within RtC. It has become evident through Healthy Stadia that establishing partnership groups around health topics is a non-confrontational focus, which can bring together a variety of organisations and agencies to work with sports clubs, many of whom may have a poor or no relationship in the past. By developing partnership working in this positive way, a variety of community projects and initiatives can spring board.

The underlying principles of Healthy Stadia promote a whole systems approach in developing the stadia as a healthy setting for visitors, patrons

and employees alike. The Healthy Stadia Partnership Working Tool will support the community engagement process and provide a way forward helping achieve the aims and objectives of the Reaching the Community project. This approach will continue to be utilised throughout the project.

Following on from the publication of the Government's 'Choosing Health' White Paper, many sports clubs have expressed an interest in developing health projects or initiatives, with some already putting together limited or stand alone projects either by themselves or in partnership with their local PCTs. Healthy Stadia provides an excellent opportunity for clubs to begin to develop or further develop health initiatives in a more meaningful and strategic way. Bringing together all the themes of Healthy Stadia under one umbrella allows clubs to develop a programme of initiatives across the whole stadium which complement each other, take full advantage of the multi-agency partnership approach and capitalise on the full potential of the stadium and its facilities to attract hard to reach groups and address local inequalities.

#### **4. Progress & Achievements**

The first year of the project, April 2005 to March 06, was very successful, with much of the time being spent building relationships with clubs, communities, local authorities and agencies and beginning the process of identifying and developing potential new projects. There has been wealth of interest in the project, particularly among the smaller clubs, with community and voluntary groups, statutory agencies and local authorities keen to explore the potential of working in partnership with their local sports club.

This report reviews the second year of the project from April 2006 to March 2007. Building on the success of the first year of the project, the work in the second year has been concentrated on supporting Port Vale FC, Shrewsbury Town FC and the Ricoh Arena in Coventry, their neighbouring communities and partner organisations. Time has also been spent in the second year developing relationships with Stoke City FC, Aston Villa and Birmingham City FC.

The most successful element of the Reaching the Community project has been the ability to forge links, develop relationships and facilitate partnerships between sports clubs, community groups, voluntary organisations, local authorities and Health agencies. It is only through the development of this genuine partnership environment that new or innovative community projects can be developed.

Feedback from clubs clearly highlights that the most valuable aspect of the Reaching the Community project to them, is the offer of an individual who will take the lead on developing projects and who has the skills and knowledge to identify the key stakeholders needed to make the partnerships and projects a success. Work has included:

- Providing support, information and examples of best practice to target sports clubs, partner organisations and community and supporter groups
- Development of new and existing relationships with target sports clubs, potential partner organisations and community and supporters groups

- Identification of potential partner organisations and opportunities for developing mutually beneficial community projects
- Brokering of meetings between sports clubs, community and supporters groups, key local stakeholders and partner organisations
- Identification of club, community and partners organisations support needs
- Facilitating the setting up of liaison groups and partnership working groups
- Having representation on and supporting existing monitoring, liaison and partnership working groups
- Undertaking community consultation
- Developing and piloting innovative community consultation tools such as 'Stadium City', 'Extra Time' and 'Talking Balls'
- Facilitating new community groups to become constituted
- Developing funding bids for community groups and partnership working groups
- Providing examples of best practice and project up-dates at liaison groups, partnership working groups and regional meetings of Supporters groups and County FAs
- Organising best practice visits

On a strategic regional level work has included:

- Regular liaison, project up-date and sharing of best practice with sports bodies including, Football in the Community, Supporters Direct, Football League, Premier League and Football Association
- Provide information and examples of best practice to local, regional and national government authorities, health agencies, media organisations, academics and students
- Promote the achievements of Reaching the Community by co-ordinating and contributing to the production of FSC newsletter, annual report and publicity and promotional materials
- Promoted a greater knowledge and understanding of the needs and concerns of stadium communities.

## **Port Vale**

The Vale Park Community Initiative

- Elected as Secretary of Vale Park Community Initiative
- Provided on-going support and advice to Vale Park Community Initiative in the development of innovative community projects, including development of intergenerational reminiscence and oral history project
- Facilitated an Arts Festival group to become constituted
- Organised best practice visit

The Vale Park Community Initiative has served as an excellent example of genuine multi-agency working and is being promoted as best practice through the 'Reaching the Community'. The project is proving to be of great interest to similar and smaller sized sports clubs and the third year of the project will explore the potential of replicating the project at other clubs in the West Midlands.

Support was given to the Burslem Arts Festival, which is based at the Burslem School of Art close to Port Vale FC, in the form of facilitating the formation of the group and helping the group write a constitution. The group aims to develop two community festivals each year and work closely with Port Vale FC and the VPCI.

Port Vale FC is in the process of developing a Children's Centre within one of their stands, in partnership with Stoke-on-Trent City Council. To support this, a best practice visit was organised by RtC for the VPCI Officer and the principle local authority Officer responsible for the centre to visit the Ricoh Arena in Coventry to meet with community representatives and tour the newly completed Community Facilities.

## **Stoke City FC**

- Community Consultation
- Stadium City Project (Engagement Tools)

The Football in the Community department at Stoke City FC requested support from RtC to support a funding application to Barclays Spaces for Sport. The application is a joint project between the SCFC and the Rugby League in order to redevelop and refurbish a small local Rugby Club ground. The project will provide much needed multi-sport community facilities to the communities neighbouring SCFC. The work involved undertaking a brief community consultation exercise with local sports and community groups in order to determine the need for community facilities in the area.

## **Ricoh Arena Coventry**

- Continued to support Ricoh Arena Monitoring Group, by providing advice and mentoring to community representatives and by providing best practice information to the group.
- Continued to support the Arena Community working group, including facilitating best practice visits to arts centres for community representatives.
- Production of Ricoh Arena Community Space Feasibility Study
- Developed constitution and code of practice for Ricoh Arena Monitoring Group
- Supported community representative in developing constitution for the Community Space Management Committee
- Supported Holbrooks Residents Association in submitting a successful funding bid to produce a regular newsletter
- Facilitated the establishment of the Community Space Management Committee
- Submitted funding bid for office and kitchen equipment on behalf of Community Space Management Committee
- Development of Big Lottery bid to employ a Centre Manager on behalf of Community Space Management Committee

The work being undertaken in Coventry through Reaching the Community builds upon and supports work already undertaken by the FSC.

Significant progress has been made in the capacity building of key groups and individuals in Coventry. Support has been given by the RtC project to help develop the skills and confidence of one particular community representative who has progressed from involvement in the Arena Community Working Group and the Ricoh Arena Monitoring Group, to developing sub-groups focusing on the development of the Green Travel Plan and the Community Space, to establishing their own residents association and joining the committees of a number of voluntary organisations including the FSC and the Coventry Community Empowerment Network (CEN) as well as representation on several local authority partnerships.

Work has included the setting up of a community space sub-group, which is responsible for the development and running of the level one community space. In order to make sure that the community space met the genuine needs of its surrounding communities, the group commissioned the Reaching the Community Officer to undertake a feasibility study, following the successful acquisition of a community chest grant from the Heart of England organisation.

The feasibility study identified the need for arts and drama facilities in the North of Coventry and also detailed the relevant resources, management structure, partners and funding, required to establish and run a successful multi-purpose community facility within the dedicated space within the Arena. The feasibility study included the organising of 3 best practice visits to recognised good examples of arts and drama facilities within the West Midlands.

The RtC project is currently working with the members of the community space group in order to help them develop into an effective management committee for the community space. This will involve establishing the group as a limited company and applying for charitable status. The information gathered in the feasibility study will serve as the basis for the development of a business plan and future funding bids. £2,500 was secured for the group from the Heart of England Foundation for kitchen and office equipment.

## **Shrewsbury**

- Developed relationship with Shrewsbury Town FC management board and Supporter's Trust
- Support and advice given to the club in negotiations with Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council regarding S106 obligations.
- Support and advice given to the Club in the development of a Green Travel Plan
- Production of Final Draft of Green Travel Plan for submission to local authority
- Facilitated the setting up of a Stadium Liaison Group
- Representation on the Stadium Liaison Group and production of draft terms of reference for the group
- Development of Healthy Stadia initiative, including chairing of meetings, recording of minutes and distribution of information
- Development of Extra Time project
- Support in developing community open day
- VPCI best practice presentation

### **Stadium Liaison Group**

The Board of Directors at Shrewsbury Town FC have been supported in order to help them meet their community commitments as part of their Section 106 planning agreements for their new ground which is due open in August 2007. A Community Liaison Group has been established, which has representation from the Club, Supporters Trust, Local Authority, emergency services, local businesses, local Councillors and community representatives. Part of the remit of the group will be to have a 'voice in' and ultimately agree the content of a sustainable Green Travel Plan for the new stadium. This has included putting together a terms of reference for the group based on existing models of best practice developed by the FSC.

Considerable progress has also already been made in developing the Travel Plan, which includes a supporters coach scheme based on the one developed for the Ricoh Arena in Coventry. Work on the Travel Plan has included providing the Club with advice and examples of best practice as well the facilitation of two best practice trips. One for board members of the Club to see park/ride and park/walk operations at Coventry and the second for members of Shrewsbury Town's Supporters Trust to meet with Coventry's Supporters Trust in order to help develop the Supporters Coach Scheme.

### **Healthy Stadia**

The Club has been very responsive to the healthy stadia concept and several potential project ideas have already been proposed around the following themes:

- A Smoke Free Stadium – The Club will be smoke free when it opens. Discussions started to provide support for those wishing to quit smoking.
- A Family Friendly Stadium – Discussions started between Club and PCT to development of breast Feeding Facilities.
- A Stadium Supporting the raising of activity levels. The partnership group aims to develop cycling projects to maximise the use of the stadium's 200 cycling bays and support the objectives of the Green Travel Plan.

An open day is being planned prior to the launch of the new stadium to allow supporters and local people to visit the new facility and to serve as a dry run for the new travel arrangements. The open day will have a health focus and feature involvement from health professionals from the PCT and local authority.

### **Extra Time**

Following on from the successful pilot of the 'Extra Time' project at Port Vale a steering group has been established to develop the project with Shrewsbury Town and Sundorne Sports College. The project will initially become part of the History Curriculum at the school but there is interest in developing it across sport and geography as well.

### **Aston Villa**

The Club is very interested in developing projects with the FSC which expand upon and broaden their community activities. They currently run a Villa Vitality programme in association with the Heart of Birmingham PCT as well a Playing for Success Scheme which centres on their Radio studios. However, they have

access to a variety of underused facilities including a fully equipped kitchen and have also received funding to develop Children's Gym with the PCT. A community day is currently being planned for mid 2007.

Investors in the Community have expressed an interest in working with the FSC as part of Reaching the Community to develop community consultation projects as part of Birmingham's 'Building Schools for the Future' programme.

### **Birmingham City FC**

- Establishment of a Stadium Liaison Group, including chairing meetings, recording minutes and distributing information.

RtC has provided support to the newly reformed Homes Estates Residents Association (HERA). The group has reformed in response to growing parking problems around Birmingham City's St. Andrews Stadium. The group is interested in developing a Healthy Stadia initiative at the club and has requested that RtC organise a series of best practice visit as well as support in putting together funding applications.

A Stadium Liaison Group has been formed, which is chaired and facilitated by RtC, the group will initially look to establish measures to overcome parking problems in the residential and business communities surrounding the ground.

### **Worcester**

Initial meetings have been held between Worcester City FC, Worcester County Cricket Club and Worcester Warriors Rugby Union, in order to develop a Healthy Stadia Initiative. The project is in its early stages but all the involved partners have expressed a keen interest in developing a project which maximised on the involvement of all the sports clubs across Worcester.

### **Regionally**

- Established relationship with FA at regional and county level, including agreement to involve and inform County FA Officers of all relevant partnership working

## **5. Sharing Best Practice**

Best practice information regarding the Reaching the Community Project is provided by regular up-date reports which are disseminated at all available opportunities as well as via the FSC's website. Progress up-dates and models of best practice are provided at all meeting of Liaison, Monitoring, Partnership and Steering Groups.

Best Practice models and case studies have been disseminated through the Football League and Supporter's Direct via their respective magazines. Progress on the project and models of best practice have also been

disseminated via County FA Regional Development Meetings and at Supporter's Trust Regional meetings, seminars and conferences.

In the first year of the project two best practice seminars were held, which were designed to bring together sports club representative's, supporters, voluntary and public sector representatives and residents. Feedback from attendees and non-attendees suggested that tailored support at the local level would be a more effective way of providing best practice information.

With this in mind it was decided to focus more on developing a portfolio of detailed case studies, which will be available via the FSC's website and by organising a series of best practice visits for key individuals around specific projects and ideas they wished to develop. This has so far been very successful, especially with Shrewsbury Town FC who found the first hand experience of visiting the Coventry Arena and speaking with their Car Park Manager to be priceless information as they learned far more from a one to one conversation than they ever could from a generic presentation. Similarly residents in Coventry found visiting Arts and Drama facilities across the West Midlands vital to the development of their vision for the Community Space within the Coventry Arena.

## **6. Problems & Issues**

The project has identified a lack of consistent partnership working among sports stadia, within the West Midlands. While there are examples of clubs working with other organisations and agencies, it is often very piecemeal and temporary. There is little strategic collaboration between partners and very little connectivity between existing partnerships or projects. Often joint working includes one or two partners and is often restricted to a single project or initiative. Where collaborations do exist, they tend to continue with the same stakeholders and do not develop and grow.

Three principle barriers that have been identified, which actively prevent sports clubs, community groups, voluntary organisations, local authorities and health agencies from working together to develop meaningful partnerships and projects. These are resources, a strategic understanding of other sectors and partners and a lack of communication.

### **Resources**

The most important factor in developing partnerships and therefore developing projects is a lack of resources in terms of time, responsibility and funding.

Most clubs are open to developing new projects particularly those which both help the local community, but also bring in new supporters and utilise their under-used facilities in terms of conference or other space. However, as much as clubs would like to develop new ideas they are very limited in terms of key individuals who have the time, skills and experience needed to research, develop and secure funding for new projects, this is particularly an issue at the smaller clubs.

At many clubs there is no key individual that is responsible for community activities beyond those of Football in the Community (FITC) which primarily

delivers coaching in schools and after school studies through the 'Playing for Success' initiative in partnership with the DfES. FITC departments themselves can differ dramatically from club to club, ranging from one part-time officer at Worcester to a department with 30 or 40 staff at Wolverhampton Wanderers.

The only limitation on the extent of community activities, which can be developed through the Reaching the Community project is again one of resources. Working on a regional basis has advantages in terms of developing an understanding of regional strategies, partners and networks, however developing partnership projects is considerably time consuming, especially in the early stages of development, which has often stretched the resources of the project.

### **Understanding of Other Sectors and Partners**

The second principle barrier to developing partnerships at stadia is a lack of understanding by sports clubs and their potential partner organisations as to each others needs and motivations and therefore an inability to see the potential areas of opportunity for working in partnership.

It can also be difficult for clubs to identify the right organisation or individual within an organisation to contact. Sports clubs are principally profit based companies and frequently do not have knowledge or experience of either the public or community and voluntary sectors.

### **Communication**

A lack of communication is one of the major barriers, which prevents clubs from engaging with local communities and potential partners. There are several factors which cause a, lack of, or breakdown in communication.

One of the key problems in clubs engaging with local communities is pre-existing animosities. In situations where a poor or negative relationship exists between clubs and their neighbours, there is often a long standing unresolved dispute which is preventing communication.

Disputes in most cases are a result of a disagreement over the negative impact of a stadium's activities, the most frequent and contentious issue being that of inadequate parking facilities at the club which cause regular disruptions in the surrounding neighbourhood and can be a major source of frustration and anger for many residents. Other issues such as litter, noise and glare from flood lights, anti-social behaviour can also be a cause of, and can compound, an already negative relationship. Animosity between a club and its neighbouring communities can also stem from disagreements over proposed stadium redevelopment or relocation planning applications.

Supporter's groups can also have a poor or difficult relationship with both their chosen clubs and residents groups. Club animosities can stem from disagreements over the governance of the club and poor relationships with residents often spills over from poor relationships between the club and community.

A breakdown of communication between sports clubs and their local authority can develop through stadium impact (as detailed above) or

through disagreements over planning applications. The rejection of a planning application can make clubs resistant to developing future relationships with local authorities.

There are a number of instances where voluntary and community sector organisations have had negative opinions of sports clubs and have been initially resistant to begin working in partnership. These instances have developed from a previous '*bad experience*' working the a sports club, these have often stemmed from a lack of understanding of each others needs, skills and motivations when working together.

## **7. Budget**

The project has been well supported over the first two years, including match funding secured for years 2 and 3 from the LankellyChase Foundation.

Additional resources for the project have been made available for support through an Awards 4 All application made through the FSC, which provided additional It, multi-media and administrative equipment, including A3 printer, multi-media projector, digital camera, ink cartridges and laminator etc. This has made a vital contribution to the quality of information, publicity and best practice materials that can be produced for the project.

A further funding bid was made to Community Chest which provided display boards in order to promote the success of the project.

There have also been a number of in-kind contributions made to RtC and the projects it has initiated. These have been from partner organisations as well as from the target Sports Clubs. These contributions have represented actual monetary savings within the budget and have included savings on travel expenses though club staff providing transport and free or discounted use of rooms and facilities etc.

## **8. Next Steps**

- **Bring in Additional Recourses**

The level of community work being carried out as part of the Vale Park Community Initiative, where a worker is in place full time, highlights that the more resources that are available directly reflects the extent of community work which can be achieved and the level of strategic involvement a club can have. There is a potential therefore to replicate the VPCI at other clubs within the West midlands in order to maximise on the full potential for clubs to engage strategically with their neighbours.

A successful preliminary application has been submitted to the Big Lottery in order to employ a centre manager to run and co-ordinate activities within the Community Space in the Ricoh Arena in Coventry. The Community Space Management Committee has requested that the Reaching the Community project take the lead in developing the project and host and manage the worker for the initial 3 year period until when it is envisaged that the post will become financially sustainable and the group will have the skills and

confidence to manage the worker themselves. A full bid will be put together and submitted on behalf of the group in April 2007.

There is a further potential to replicate the VPCI at Shrewsbury Town FC. A best practice presentation was organised by RtC for representatives from Shrewsbury Town FC, supporters groups and Supporter's Direct. Both the club and the supporter's were very impressed by the presentation by the VPCI Officer and expressed a keen interest in replicating the project at Shrewsbury Town through the RtC project.

- **Improve Communications and Understanding**

The key to the development of the project has been the ability to offer a resource to sports clubs while at the same time having the skills and experience to overcome communication barriers and build productive partnerships. The key to encouraging involvement in partnerships has been the ability to offer a frame work such as Healthy Stadia and pilot engagement projects as Extra Time, Stadium City and Talking Balls etc.

These and other non confrontation tools will continue to be developed through the RtC project, together with best practice materials and events and used to develop engagement projects and partnerships at the remaining sports clubs across the West Midlands to engage with their local communities

**Chris Lawley**  
**Development Officer - Reaching the Community**

## Action Plan

The Action Plan below outlines the mechanisms or activities identified to meet the needs or take advantage of the opportunities highlighted in each area. The action Plan summaries the outputs and outcomes of the activities and identifies any potential barriers to developing those activities. A timescale is given for completion within the context of the project.

The aim over the next year is to continue to develop the agreed activities at each of the clubs already on board and to continue to develop relationships with the remaining target clubs.

Reaching the Community - Action Plan April 2007 – March 2008						
Work Area	Identified Needs/ Opportunities	Mechanism	Outputs	Outcomes	Barriers	Time Scale
<b>AFC Telford United</b>	- Supporters Trust owned Club already in partnership with local authority. Desire to develop further community projects. Desire to better understand and widen supporter base	- Talking Balls project	- Club Staff, Supporters and community attendance and participation in 'Talking Balls' project	- Awareness raised of men's health issues - Relationship developed with PCT	- Talking Balls targets typically hard to reach group	- Talking Balls to run through March 2007
<b>Aston Villa FC</b>	- Community Investment Company Established - Desire to develop usage of Radio Studios - Funding secure for Children's Gym with PCT - Access to under-used fully equipped kitchen	- Development of a Community Café - Development of Reminiscence project utilising radio Studios - Talking Balls project	- Older and Younger people engaged in community projects - Club Staff, Supporters and community attendance and participation in 'Talking Balls' project	- Outcomes to be determined once projects as projects develop - Awareness raised of men's health issues - Relationship developed with PCT	- Talking Balls targets typically hard to reach group	- ongoing - Talking Balls to run through March 2007

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- New Chairman and more Structured Community Department in place</li> <li>- Strong relationship with PCT</li> <li>- Opportunity to pilot projects as part of 'Building Schools for the Future Programme'</li> </ul>					
<b>Bromsgrove Rovers FC</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Poor relationship between Club and Supporters Trust</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work with both the Club, the Supporters Trust and Supporters Direct to improve relationships</li> <li>- Work with PCT to explore potential projects</li> </ul>			Difficulty in arranging meetings with Supporters Trust	- ongoing
<b>Birmingham City FC</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- FitC desire to work with wider Community</li> <li>- Desire to develop satellite community programme at Halesowen Town</li> <li>- Dudley Local Authority have requested FSC support in developing Birmingham sports network</li> <li>- Request for FSC input into the new Birmingham Sport Village</li> <li>- Parking problems affecting Local residents</li> <li>- Liaison group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continue to development liaison group at Birmingham City FC in order to overcome parking issues</li> <li>- Continue to develop potential of Birmingham Sports Network project</li> <li>- Expand Building Schools for the future programme to include Birmingham City</li> <li>- Representation on Stadium Liaison Group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Development of initiatives to combat parking problems</li> <li>- Development of joint project with Halesowen Town, Birmingham City FC and Dudley Regeneration Zone, Community groups and key partners identified</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Local residents have input into development of initiatives to combat parking problems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Funding required to develop Birmingham Sports Network Project</li> </ul>	- ongoing

	established at Birmingham City					
<b>Coventry City FC</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- LA owned Multi-use Arena</li> <li>- Dedicated Community Space managed by local community</li> <li>- Arena Monitoring Group established</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Development of Community space management group</li> <li>- Development of residents association activities</li> <li>- Programme of workshops and training for community group</li> <li>- Talking Balls</li> <li>- Employment of Community Space Manager</li> <li>- Representation on Arena Monitoring Group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Further best practice visits organised</li> <li>- Skills of Community space management group developed</li> <li>- Residents Association activities developed</li> <li>- Club Staff, Supporters and community attendance and participation in 'Talking Balls' project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Feasibility Study has increased residents understanding, confidence and ability to engage with relevant partners and agencies</li> <li>- Community Space Management Committee has allowed Community to guide use of community facilities</li> <li>- Awareness raised of men's health issues</li> <li>- Relationship developed with PCT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Funding required for Community Space Manager</li> <li>- Talking Balls targets typically hard to reach group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ongoing</li> <li>- Funding bid expected to be submitted in March 2007</li> <li>- Talking Balls to run through March 2007</li> </ul>
<b>Halesowen Town FC</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Desire to develop community projects</li> <li>- Desire to redevelop ground including community facilities</li> <li>- desire to improve relationship with neighbouring community</li> <li>- Continue to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Development of Birmingham City FC, Community Project at Halesowen Town FC</li> <li>- Development of Community Liaison Group</li> <li>- Community Consultation regarding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mechanism established in Halesowen to start to addressing parking problems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Local residents have input into development of initiatives to combat parking problems</li> </ul>		ongoing

	develop community Liaison Group at Halesowen Town FC	Community facilities - Representation on stadium Liaison Group				
<b>Hereford United FC</b>	- LA desire to develop intergenerational work with Club.	- Development of Pilot 'Extra Time' intergeneration partnership project with LA, Port Vale FC and Shrewsbury Town FC	- Gruntvig working group established at Port Vale FC			ongoing
<b>Kidderminster Harriers FC</b>	- Supporters Trust desire to work with neighbouring community and develop community projects	- Work with both the Club, the Supporters Trust and Supporters Direct to improve relationships - Talking Balls	- Club Staff, Supporters and community attendance and participation in 'Talking Balls' project	- Awareness raised of men's health issues - Relationship developed with PCT	Difficulty in arranging meetings with Supporters Trust - Talking Balls targets typically hard to reach group	- Ongoing - Talking Balls to run through March 2007
<b>Port Vale FC</b>	- Club desire to improve and develop relationships with neighbouring communities, statutory agencies and other sports clubs - Community consultation undertaken, project ideas identified - Supporters Trust desire to build capacity of members - Constituted anti-racism initiative in place - Funding Secured for 21/2 year PPCI project from	- Development 'Stadium City' partnership project with Creative Partnerships, 2 local schools and Stoke City FC - Development of 'Extra Time' intergenerational partnership project with Hereford City Council - Launch of Talking Balls - Development of a variety of community projects by PPCI Officer - Facilitate the establishment of a	- Support given to 'Valiants Against Racism' (VAR) in identifying funding opportunities - FSC chair of PPCI steering group as well as managing the project - RTC Officer elected Secretary - Support given to Supporters Trust via PPCI - 'Stadium City' DVD available as best practice tool - Club Staff, Supporters and	- Younger and Older people participation in various community projects including reminiscence project - Awareness raised of men's health issues through 'Talking Balls'	- Funding secured for Heritage Lottery for development of reminiscence - Talking Balls targets typically hard to reach group	- Vale Park Community Initiative worker funded until April 2008 - Stadium City project to run December 2005 to Sept 2006 - Talking Balls to run through March 2007

	Coalfields Regeneration Trust - Lack of formal residents groups in the area	community/residents group	community attendance and participation in 'Talking Balls' project			
<b>Shrewsbury Town FC</b>	- Stadium in the process of relocation, - New stadium to include community facilities - Community Liaison Group established to develop Green Travel Plan - Healthy Stadia Steering Group established	- Development of Green Travel Plan - Development of Supporters Coach Scheme - Development of Health Stadia Programme for new stadium - Development of 'Extra Time' project - Community facilities consultation - Talking Balls - Representation on stadium Liaison Group - Community Open Day planned as part of the new stadium launch - Explore Replication of VPCI	- Club Staff, Supporters and community attendance and participation in 'Talking Balls' project - Best Practice visits organised for Directors and Supporters groups	- Younger and Older people participation in reminiscence project - Awareness raised of men's health issues - Relationship developed with PCT - Club has better understanding of how to develop effective Green Travel Plan - Supporters have knowledge needed to develop Supporter's Coach Scheme	Funding required to undertake community consultation - Talking Balls targets typically hard to reach group	- New Stadium to open August 2007 - 'Extra Time' project to run through March - Talking Balls to run through March 2007
<b>Stafford Rangers FC</b>	- Supporters Trust have desire to work with PCT - PCT interest in promoting health issues to supporters	- Work with both the Club, the Supporters Trust and Supporters Direct to improve relationships - Work with PCT to explore potential projects	- Health Walk established - Health topics Pub Quiz developed	- PCT aware of opportunities sports club can offer in meeting health targets - Supporters trust members more aware of health issues		ongoing
<b>Stoke City FC</b>	- Desire to work with	- Development of FSC	- FSC to project	- Young people		Ongoing

	wider community - Club developing satellite community sports facilities	partnership project with Creative Partnerships, 2 local schools and Port Vale FC - Community consultation regarding community facilities	manage 'Stadium City' on behalf of Creative Partnerships and BBC Stoke - Community Consultation undertaken	from target schools engaged in guiding the Creative Partnership project - FSC to project manage 'Stadium City' on behalf of Creative Partnerships and BBC Stoke		
<b>Walsall FC</b>	- Club desire to develop relationship with PCT - Poor relationship with Supporters Trust	- Work with both the Club, the Supporters Trust and Supporters Direct to improve relationships - Talking Balls - Broker meetings between Club and PCT	- Club Staff, Supporters and community attendance and participation in 'Talking Balls' project	- Awareness raised of men's health issues - Relationship developed with PCT	- Talking Balls targets typically hard to reach group	- Ongoing - Talking Balls to run through March 2007
<b>West Bromwich Albion FC</b>	- Desire to work with wider community - Desire to expand community work including Arts based projects within community facilities	- Talking Balls -	- Club Staff, Supporters and community attendance and participation in 'Talking Balls' project	- Awareness raised of men's health issues - Relationship developed with PCT	- Talking Balls targets typically hard to reach group	- ongoing - Talking Balls to run through March 2007
<b>Wolverhampton Wanderers FC</b>	- Club desire to develop relationship with PCT - Desire to expand community work	- Talking Balls – - Broker meetings between Club and PCT	- Club Staff, Supporters and community attendance and participation in 'Talking Balls' project	- Awareness raised of men's health issues - Relationship developed with PCT	- Talking Balls targets typically hard to reach group	- ongoing - Talking Balls to run through March 2007
<b>Worcester City FC</b>	- Clubs desire to	- Broker meetings	- Club Directors	- Seminar		ongoing

	develop community projects and expand currently limited facilities and community department - Club desire to work with Worcester Rugby and Cricket Clubs - Club desire to work with PCT	between Football, Rugby and Cricket clubs - Broker meeting with Club and PCT	attendance at regional seminar	attendees better informed regarding the project and good practice examples of community engagement tools and projects		
<b>Warwickshire County Cricket Club</b>						ongoing
<b>Worcester County Cricket Club</b>	- Cricket, Rugby and Football clubs all share a desire to work together on community projects	- Multi-Sport Healthy Stadia programme for Worcester	- Key Partners Identified - Development of Healthy Stadia Programme			ongoing
<b>Worcester Warriors RUFC</b>	- Cricket, Rugby and Football clubs all share a desire to work together on community projects	- Multi-Sport Healthy Stadia programme for Worcester	- Key Partners Identified - Development of Healthy Stadia Programme			ongoing
<b>County Football Associations</b>	- Opportunity for County FAs to support and contribute to local projects - Opportunity to disseminate good practice through West Midlands County FA Development Officers	- Identify opportunities for County FAs to support and contribute to local projects	- Staffordshire FA invited to attend Vale Park Community Initiative Steering Group Meeting -	- All County FAs in West Midlands informed of Reaching the Community local projects		- ongoing
<b>Dissemination</b>	- Project updates and reports and good practice	- Project Progress and progress of supporters trust community work	- Project up-date given at regional Supporters trust	- Supporters trusts aware of the project and its		

	<p>disseminated through meetings, reports, and best practice visits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regular feedback on project requested by Supporters Direct</li> <li>- Regular progress updates featured in FSC quarterly newsletter</li> <li>- Regular progress updates featured on FSC website</li> <li>- Project Interim Reports available electronically via FSC website</li> </ul>	<p>disseminated at Regional Supporters Trust meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Project Progress disseminated through County FAs</li> <li>- Best practice disseminated at Liaison/Monitoring /partnership groups</li> </ul>	<p>meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Project Progress given at County FA Regional Development Meeting</li> <li>- Best practice visits organised</li> <li>- Liaison/Monitoring /partnership groups provide mechanism for community reps and other partners to receive best practice information</li> </ul>	<p>progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- FSC regularly informed of supporters trust community activities</li> <li>- Project updates and reports disseminated through FSC newsletter and website</li> <li>- Members of Liaison/Monitoring /partnership groups better informed regarding examples of best practice</li> </ul>		
<b>Staffordshire University</b>	<p>Desire to develop learning, training and volunteer programme with FSC locally and regionally</p>	<p>Development of a programme of learning, training and volunteer opportunities</p>	<p>Development of a programme of learning, training and volunteer opportunities</p>			ongoing

**Key:**

FSC – Federation of Stadium Communities

VPCI – Vale Park Community Initiative

LA – Local Authority

FiTC – Football in the Community

PCT – Primary Care Trust

LRC – Learning Resource Centre

MAWG – Multi-Agency Working Group

MAP – Multi-Agency Partnership

LSP – Local Strategic Partnership