COACHING FOR ALL (CFA)
RESEARCH REPORT

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FOREWARD

"Sport England recognises the importance of ensuring that the coach workforce is inclusive and does not exclude anyone based on their ethnicity. A coach workforce that is not fully inclusive reflects a sports system that is not fully inclusive. Developing a more diverse coach workforce is essential in tackling the ethnic inequalities in participation rates because of the changes that this supports within the broader sport system. Projects such as Coaching for All (CFA) enable coaches from diverse and minority communities to have a voice and to connect with others in ways that will enable them to support inactive communities to become more active and to tackle inequalities in participation by creating an environment where everyone is welcome to take part."

Viveen Taylor
Director of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
Sport England

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Coaching for All (CFA) was funded by Sport England and delivered between March 2020 and June 2021 by Sporting Communities which is a Community Interest Company. Programme delivery was supported by UK Coaching and Sporting Equals.

Loughborough University was commissioned to undertake research to capture the transferable learning from the pilot programme and to provide recommendations to enhance the diversity of coaches who are active within communities. The research involved online surveys with coaches at the start and end of the programme, qualitative interviews and focus groups with coaches and programme deliverers.

The programme recruited 29 participants from disadvantaged communities who identified as Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic or as a Refugee. All participants were aged 16+ and lived in, or near, Stoke-on-Trent or Derby. Participants engaged in a 12-month learning process focused on becoming paid sport coaches which enabled gaining insight relevant to developing a more ethnically diverse coaching workforce. The restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic impacted significantly on the delivery of the programme and as a result the majority of the programme was delivered online with coaches engaging remotely.

Participant barriers to becoming coaches

Research identified a series of structural and cultural barriers experienced by coaches. Prior to participating in the Coaching for All (CFA) programme these barriers were reported as having impacted on the self-confidence and aspirations of coaches and to have limited the development of a more ethnically diverse sports coaching workforce. These barriers are categorised as follows:

(i) Socio-economic and cultural constraints, including work, study, financial and familial pressures and the tendency for sports coaching to not be viewed as a viable voluntary activity or career pathway for some ethnically diverse communities.

(ii) Limited knowledge and awareness of local coaching opportunities, local coach development courses, and local coach development networks.

(iii) Limited availability of, and financial accessibility to, local coaching opportunities, local coach development courses and local coach development networks, and the lack of related resource and mentoring support in some sports.

(iv) Negative experiences and exclusion, when undertaking coaching and coach development, with respect to instances of racialised (and gendered) bias, stereotyping and a lack of ethnically diverse role models.

Participant motivations to take part in Coaching for All (CFA)

Research indicated that participants exhibited a series of inter-related motivations for taking part in the Coaching for All (CFA) programme. These motivations are categorised as follows:

(i) Accessibility, including potential opportunities to access and undertake accredited coaching courses, coach development opportunities, and coach placement activities. Also, potential opportunities to engage with mentoring support and guidance and other coaches with similar experiences and backgrounds to develop skills and confidence in a safe and supportive environment.

(ii) Learning, including potential opportunities to learn from qualified coach developers and mentors, and other coaches with similar experiences and backgrounds. Also, potential opportunities to improve knowledge and understanding of requisite technical and social skills to better support player and club development in local communities.

(iii) Career, including potential opportunities to enhance coaching qualification portfolios, increase the quantity and quality of voluntary coaching in local communities, and become positive role models for others with similar experiences and backgrounds. Also, potential opportunities to enhance visibility, profile and employability and increase the likelihood of accessing paid coaching in sports.

Participant experiences of taking part in Coaching for All (CFA)

The experiences of the coaches taking part in the Coaching for All (CFA) programme were categorised as follows:

(i) Online-based delivery and learning.
The majority of coaches indicated that they had access to IT equipment and a space where they could comfortably take part in online activities. Whilst some coaches expressed disappointment that in-person and practical sessions were limited due to the COVID-19 pandemic, overall it was felt online mechanisms increased attendance and enabled sufficient learning to be achieved.

(ii) Session-based delivery and learning.
The majority of coaches reported that they felt comfortable, valued and included and that their views were listened to and considered during programme sessions. This was felt to be underscored by the accessible and supportive approach of staff and the flexible approach to delivery and learning.

(iii) Content-based delivery and learning.
The majority of coaches reported that the content of the programme and the contributions from Sport England, Sporting Equals, UK Coaching and guest speakers was relevant and valuable to their development as coaches. The pedagogical insights gained from both community and elite sports contexts and around equality, diversity and inclusion were particularly valued.

(iv) Programme team delivery and learning.
The majority of coaches reported that the programme team met the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic well and were knowledgeable, supportive and had helped coaches to develop their skill sets.

Programme effectiveness

The effectiveness of the Coaching for All (CFA) programme, and the ways in which prior motivations of participants were increasingly realised in practice, were categorised as follows:

(i) Accessibility, including realised opportunities to access and undertake accredited coaching courses, coach development and coach placement activities. Opportunities to gain mentoring support and guidance and engage with other coaches with similar experiences and backgrounds were also realised. Realising these accessibility opportunities was considered especially useful in providing new insights into coaching practice and brokering connections between coaches and local sports coaching networks.

(ii) Learning, including realised opportunities to learn from qualified coach developers and mentors, and other coaches with similar.

experiences and backgrounds. Other realised opportunities were improving knowledge and understanding of the technical aspects of coaching and working with people to better support player and club development in local communities. The effectiveness of these realised learning opportunities was underscored by discussion with coaching experts and clarified the actions required to fulfil individual coaching aspirations.

(iii) Career, including realised opportunities to enhance coaching qualification portfolios, to increase the quantity and quality of voluntary coaching in local communities, and to become positive role models for others with similar experiences and backgrounds. Opportunities to enhance the visibility, profile and employability of coaches were also realised. Most coaches felt well placed to capitalise on these experiences and were confident of their ability to access voluntary and paid coaching in local sports coaching networks thereafter.

Positive impacts and future aspirations

Despite the significant impact of the pandemic on delivery all 29 participants were given the opportunity to undertake National Governing Body qualifications. Of these:

> **12 participants achieved 1 qualification**

> **3 participants achieved 2 qualifications**

> **5 participants were enrolled on courses at the close of the Coaching for All (CFA) programme**

The positive impacts and future aspirations for coaches and for the Coaching for All (CFA) programme were categorised as follows:

(i) Positive impact and future aspirations for coaches: Most coaches were more confident in their abilities to coach and to encourage inactive people to become active. Additionally, most coaches were confident in their ability to gain opportunities to become a paid coach in the future. Other impacts and aspirations cited included:

- **Increased personal and social skills,** with respect to confidence, communication, organisation and enhanced aspirations to become volunteer or paid coaches.

- **Increased technical skills,** with respect to enhanced knowledge and understanding of coaching philosophies and techniques.

- **Increased knowledge of coaching pathways,** with respect to the local coach development and careers landscape and clarified prospective ambitions and understanding of progression requirements.

- **Increased social capital and networks,** with respect to increased connectivity and collectivism.

(ii) Positive impact and future aspirations for Coaching for All (CFA): Most coaches reported that Coaching for All (CFA) enabled their development as coaches and consequently they were optimistic about implementing their learning in real-life coaching situations in the future. Most coaches also reported feeling empowered to pursue future goals to progress their coaching careers because of Coaching for All (CFA). Almost all coaches would strongly recommend the programme and they suggested making it available to others experiencing financial constraints regardless of their ethnicity in the future. Other impacts and aspirations cited by the Coaching for All (CFA) programme team at an operational level included:

- **Enhanced understanding of the realities of equality, diversity and inclusion,** with respect to increased staff knowledge and understanding of issues impacting on ethnically diverse populations and racialised barriers experienced in sports coaching contexts.

- **Enhanced recognition of the importance of recruiting a diverse workforce,** with respect to the realised recruitment of volunteer and paid coaches from the programme and the consequent increased ethnic diversity of staff at Sporting Communities.

- **The importance of flexibility in programme design and delivery,** with respect to the capacity of the programme team to adapt and deliver content, recruit and retain participants, and develop a bespoke and transferable pedagogical product for use with similarly marginalised groups.

- **Enhanced relationships with other organisations,** with respect to working creatively, purposefully and effectively with ethnically diverse participants, local sports providers and national sports development agencies.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Programme overview

The Coaching for All (CFA) programme was funded by Sport England and delivered between March 2020 and June 2021 by Sporting Communities which is a Community Interest Company. The programme delivery was supported by UK Coaching and Sporting Equals. Due to the timings of the delivery the programme was impacted significantly by the restrictions imposed in response to COVID-19. In particular, the majority of the delivery was conducted online rather than in-person as was initially intended.

The programme aimed to recruit 30 participants from disadvantaged communities who identified as Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic or as a Refugee. All participants were individuals aged 16+ and lived in, or near to, Stoke-on-Trent or Derby. Participants were recruited to take part in a 12-month learning process to gain understanding of why sports coaches from ethnically diverse backgrounds are underrepresented in paid coaching roles and how the sports and leisure industry can better support individuals from ethnically diverse backgrounds into roles as paid sport coaches. The programme plan focused around the five stages of Sport England's workforce development plan; Recruit, Deploy, Develop, Employ, Retain.

Programme aims

It was anticipated that the Coaching for All (CFA) programme would result in transferable learning to enhance understanding of:

1. Barriers experienced by the target audience and potential responses

2. Barriers to employment and coaching careers experienced by the target audience and potential responses

3. Motivations for coaches to develop from volunteer coaches to employed coaches

4. Experiences that may deter coaches from diverse backgrounds

5. Experiences of organisations that recruit coaches and ideas on recruiting a more diverse workforce

6. Ways to retain a diverse coach workforce and the potential impact on communities

RECRUIT
Identify suitable committed individuals and support them to be "Coach Ready".

DEPLOY
Signpost coaches into sports sessions/clubs to practice new skills.

DEVELOP
Access further training to enhance skills and broaden knowledge and aptitude through volunteering experiences.

EMPLOY
Utilise Sporting Communities partnerships to provide work experience, apprenticeships and employment opportunities.

RETAIN
Coaches to coach in their community changing sport by becoming recognisable leaders and role models to inspire others to take up coaching.

2.2. Research Overview

Loughborough University was commissioned to undertake research to capture the transferable learning from the pilot programme and to provide recommendations to enhance the diversity of coaches who are active within communities. Data was collated from the delivery team and from the participants (coaches) involved in the programme as outlined below.

Delivery team – data collection

Regular communication was maintained with the delivery team throughout the roll-out of the programme and the research team attended two workshops during the programme. At the end of the programme telephone interviews were conducted with three members of the Coaching for All (CFA) delivery team to examine their learning from the experiences and to distil best practice lessons. The delivery team also took part in a focus group with participants as outlined below.

Participants – data collection

Data was collated from participants at the start of the programme and at the end of the programme. The start of programme data collection involved an online survey and telephone interviews with a sample of coaches. All recruited coaches were asked to complete a short online survey which examined their attitudes to coaching at the start of the pilot. This survey was completed by 27 participants. Telephone interviews were then conducted with a sample of coaches (n=13) to examine participants' prior experiences and real and perceived barriers, their coaching aspirations, motivations, expectations and intentions.

The end of programme data collection involved an online survey and focus groups with coaches. The online survey was conducted with coaches to examine their experiences of Coaching for All (CFA), the impact of the programme and to distil recommendations for the future (n=20). Focus groups were also conducted using an Appreciative Inquiry approach. Appreciative Inquiry is a strength-based approach focused on the positive elements of an organisation or intervention which aims to engage stakeholders in identifying positive practice to shape the future. This approach was adopted because of its potential to identify innovations that may lead to change in the longer term. Two repeat initial online group discussion sessions were held on 22 February and 1 March 2021. The sessions were attended by eleven coaches who had taken part in the Coaching for All (CFA) programme between April 2020 and March 2021. Two follow-up online group discussion sessions were then held on 22 and 29 March 2021 which were attended by eight out of the original eleven coaches who had taken part in the first group discussion sessions. Members of the Coaching for All (CFA) delivery team also attended the second focus group session.

"I think it was a good opportunity to help build my confidence with other people that may be in a similar boat to me. Having that opportunity to try things out."

Coach, Start of Programme Interview

3. DELIVERY TEAM FINDINGS

3.1 Programme aims and delivery

3.1.1 Aim and intentions of the programme

The programme team indicated that the original aims and intentions of the programme were informed by their involvement of working with ethnically diverse populations in locales experiencing multiple indices of deprivation. These informants were reported as broadly three-fold:

• Lack of awareness amongst aspiring coaches from ethnically diverse backgrounds as to the process through which to become volunteer or paid coaches.

• Lack of targeted support for aspiring coaches from ethnically diverse backgrounds to enable their transition to become volunteer or paid coaches.

• A consequent under-representation of coaches from ethnically diverse backgrounds in both the voluntary and paid coaching workforce.

In response to these informants, the programme team indicated that the initial aims and intentions of the programme centred around three inter-related areas:

• Increasing the aspirations of ethnically diverse populations to engage in coaching and to enhance their awareness as to pathways to become volunteer or paid coaches.

• Developing a formalised programme of coach education activities and coaching placement opportunities through which to equip aspiring coaches from ethnically diverse backgrounds with relevant skill sets and experiences to become volunteer or paid coaches.

• Embedding within these activities a programme of research to examine their implementation and effectiveness and to identify enabling and constraining factors experienced by aspiring coaches from ethnically diverse backgrounds (hereafter referred to as 'participants').

The programme planning was undertaken in collaboration with partner organisations, including Sport England, UK Coaching, and Sporting Equals. Central to this process was the development of six educational modules designed to empower participants with requisite skills and knowledge to become volunteer or paid coaches. The modules focused on: multi-skills coaching; community/performance coaching pathways; equality, diversity and duty of care; coaching relationships and psychology; practical/observational learning and sports leadership; sustainability and CPD opportunities. The delivery team also indicated intentions to provide resource support to participants to complete NGB accredited Level 1 coaching awards, and to facilitate coaching placement opportunities at local sports providers such as charitable organisations and sports clubs.

3.1.2 Selection and recruitment of participants

The Coaching for All (CFA) programme was open to participants drawn from ethnically diverse and refugee backgrounds ranging from minimal or no experience of coaching to experienced, however none of the participants had ever undertaken paid coaching. All participants demonstrated a strong interest and commitment to developing formalised skill sets and gaining practical experiences in this field.

Advertising the programme was undertaken in conjunction with pre-established educational and community sports networks in Derby and Stoke-on-Trent, and included posters, leaflets, presentations, and social media. Whilst advertising of this kind was reported to be relatively successful in attracting applications in Derby, this success was less apparent in the arguably less racially integrated City of Stoke-on-Trent, and where the programme also experienced some 'white backlash' as an ethnically targeted positive action scheme. Further, in both locales, the delivery team reflected that advertising the programme as a combined coach development and research

project (rather than more singularly as a coach development project), probably also limited applications in the first instance. Nonetheless, whilst the programme began delivering its first module at around two-thirds of participant capacity (20 participants), the continued efforts of the programme team ensured that it was operating at full participant capacity within the first month of operation.

3.1.3 Changes to the programme resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic

The programme team reported that the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic and related lock-down restrictions from March 2020 onwards had a significant impact on the programme. In the first instance, this led the programme team to undertake an initial one-month period in which to 'revise' and 'recalibrate' the original aims and intentions, and to reflect on and reshape its proposed content and delivery mechanisms. This was reflective of an adaptive and considered response by the programme team to the shifting public health backdrop and enforced changes to social life engendered by local and national government in response to the COVID-19 crisis. Consequently, intentions to deliver in-person practical sessions at local sports facilities and to facilitate local coaching placement opportunities were curtailed. Also, plans to support participants to undertake NGB accredited Level 1 courses were halted.

As a response to the contextual challenges the efforts of the programme team shifted to ensuring the online (rather than in-person) delivery of six educational modules was designed to empower participants with relevant coaching skill sets. In doing so, the delivery team consulted extensively with participants as to their preference and availability to attend online sessions and ensured that participants had access to laptops and tablets to facilitate this. All six modules and related sessions were delivered by the programme team via Zoom on a fortnightly basis for the two geographical locations between April 2020 and June 2021. In places, these module sessions were supported by input from specialist guest speakers drawn from across the UK sports coaching landscape.

The programme team reported that despite the pedagogical challenges arising from the enforced changes to programme content and delivery, they were nonetheless successful in maintaining strong levels of engagement amongst participants over time. Success was shown quantitatively in terms of the numbers of participants and the consistency of their attendance at sessions, and qualitatively in terms of the ways in which participants engaged with learning within sessions. Achieving this was underpinned by the efforts of the programme team ensuring:

- The relevance and applicability of the module content and adapting it accordingly against the wider public health and political backdrop of COVID-19 and the Black Lives Matter movement.

- Sessions were delivered in an inclusive and interactive way within which the experiences of participants were centralised and valued.

- Sessions were supported in places with presentations from specialist guest speakers with experience of coaching in high performance and community sports contexts.

- The programme team provided consistent one-to-one support and feedback to participants.

These deliberate efforts to establish trust were felt to be central to building positive supportive relationships and maintaining engagement with the programme and the learning featured within it over time.

3.2. Programme effectiveness and impacts of the programme

3.2.1 Benefits and challenges for participants

The programme team reported that the programme was effective in supporting a series of key learning and developmental benefits for participants. These positive impacts were reported as:

- **Increased personal and social skills,** such as confidence, communication, organisation skills and enhanced aspirations to become volunteer or paid coaches.

- **Increased technical skills of participants,** with respect to knowledge and understanding of coaching philosophies and techniques. Here, it was indicated that whilst COVID-19 had limited opportunities to apply this learning in practice,

participants were felt to have become 'coach ready' to be able to do so upon the easing of lockdown restrictions. Not least of all as a result of realised opportunities to undertake CPD built-in to the online module sessions and signposted by the programme team.

- **Increased knowledge of coaching pathways,** with respect to the local coach development and careers landscape. This was felt to have helped participants to clarify their prospective ambitions and to have equipped them with an understanding of the requirements to progress within these educational and vocational contexts.

- **Increased social capital and networks,** with respect to connectivity and collectivism amongst participants. This was felt to have been engendered by the efforts of the programme team to promote community 'togetherness' and 'solidarity' and the willingness of participants to support each other to achieve their goals against the backdrop of the social impacts caused by engendered by by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The above benefits were reported by the programme team to have been realised against a backdrop of challenges arising from the enforced changes to the programme content and delivery as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The programme team reflected on the disappointment felt by participants and staff that opportunities to deliver in-person practical sessions and facilitate coaching placements were forcibly curtailed. Similarly, that opportunities for participants to attend NGB Level 1 coaching courses were greatly reduced during this period. Relatedly, the programme team indicated that the switch to fortnightly online learning had over the course of the year engendered some 'Zoom fatigue'. Further, it had necessitated some often time consuming and labour-intensive efforts amongst staff to maintain engagement amongst some participants. This was especially the case in relation to participants experiencing personal difficulties such as precarious employment, financial pressures, health issues and family bereavements as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

3.2.2 Benefits and challenges for Sporting Communities

The programme team indicated that the experience of delivering the programme had resulted in a series of key learning and developmental benefits at an organisational level.

- **Enhanced understanding of the realities of equality, diversity and inclusion.** In this respect, the programme team reported that the establishment of positive relationships with participants had increased staff knowledge and understanding of issues impacting on the everyday lives of ethnically diverse populations and the shape and scope of racialised barriers experienced in sports coaching contexts.

- **Recognition of the importance of recruiting a diverse workforce.** The programme team indicated that a number of participants were recruited as volunteer and paid coaches by Sporting Communities to assist the delivery of other projects and initiatives. This was felt to have had a positive effect in increasing the ethnic diversity of the staff team at Sporting Communities and positioned the organisation as more representative and trusted within local ethnically diverse communities.

- **The ability to be flexible in programme design and delivery.** In this respect, the programme team reflected positively on their realised abilities to adapt and deliver programme content at short notice and to have engaged, retained and supported the progression of participants throughout the challenging period engendered by the COVID-19 pandemic. Further, in doing so, it was felt that the programme team had developed a bespoke but replicable pedagogical product which might have transferability as a mechanism for engaging similarly marginalised groups in other sporting and cultural contexts.

- **Enhanced relationships with other organisations.** The programme team felt that their experiences of programme delivery had also enabled them to build new relationships and networks with ethnically diverse participants, local sports providers and national sports development agencies, including Sport England, Sporting Equals and

UK Coaching. This was felt to have enabled Sporting Communities to showcase their knowledge, capacities and relevance and to have positioned them favourably in relation to future funding applications.

The above benefits were reported by the programme team to have been realised against a backdrop of structural, organisational and public health challenges arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. In this respect, the programme team reflected on the limited initial time period in which to 'revise' and 'recalibrate' the original intentions of the programme, and the shift from in-person to online content delivery. The programme team referred to the often time consuming and labour-intensive efforts of staff to establish positive relationships and maintain engagement with some participants, especially those with limited time management skills, experiencing personal difficulties, and with waning motivations. These challenges were felt to be further exacerbated in relation to efforts to manage and support participants with different levels of coaching experience and varied expectations and aspirations towards future voluntary or paid coaching careers. Taken together, whilst the efforts of staff to go 'above and beyond' were highly commended by the programme management team and by participants, the necessitation of such efforts were also felt to be indicative of an occasional lack of fit between the aims and expectations of the programme and the limited availability of financial and in-kind resource underpinning work of this kind.

3.3 Organisational learning and future aspirations

3.3.1 Key learning points and future aspirations

The programme team reflected on a series of key learning points from their experiences of programme delivery and outlined future aspirations for work in this field. Such reflections were made in the context of enforced changes engendered by the COVID-19 pandemic and the anticipated easing of lockdown restrictions and return to social normality in the future.

Programme content and delivery

- **Blended delivery:** The programme team reflected on the benefits and challenges of using web-based mechanisms of communication and expressed a willingness to adopt a blended approach of online and in-person learning in the future. In the former case, the programme team referred to the potential to deliver similar online module content and supported by guest speakers.

- **Learning blocks:** The programme team indicated that shorter blocks of learning may have enhanced participants' experiences. For example, over a six-month rather than twelve-month period. This was felt to have the potential to limit 'Zoom fatigue' and to maintain consistent levels of engagement amongst participants. Further, it was felt that shorter blocks of online delivery might be punctuated with in-person practical sessions and be supplemented with opportunities to undertake coaching placements, NGB Level 1 courses and other CPD courses.

- **Programme accreditation:** The programme team were also keen to explore the potential for the programme to be accredited as a generic community coach award by relevant sports bodies.

- **Sustained funding:** Central to the ethics, values and philosophy of Sporting Communities, there was a strong consensus amongst the programme team that the programme should remain free at the point of entry, and that efforts would be made to access financial and in-kind resource support from key partner organisations to ensure that accessibility for aspiring coaches from socio-economically deprived locales was maintained.

Broadening engagement in the programme

- **Including participants experiencing multiple barriers:** The programme team also expressed a willingness to replicate the target focus of the programme towards ethnically diverse populations and with a renewed emphasis on attracting participants experiencing multiple forms of marginalisation across intersections of ethnicity, gender and social class.

- **Creating opportunities for collaboration:** Delivery staff expressed an openness to consider broadening the focus of the programme to include ethnically diverse and white participants and with a revised emphasis on promoting improved inter-ethnic relations and racialised integration in some locales.

Creating exit strategies for participants

- **Supporting transitions into (paid) coaching:** The programme team referred to the importance of developing improved mechanisms for post-programme exit strategies for participants, to better support their transition into 'real-life' community coaching settings. This was felt to be essential to increasing the likelihood of a sustainable engagement with community coaching amongst participants.

- **Continuing support for coaches to work with their communities:** The programme team has recently accessed additional resource to support a series of three month 'social action' projects, wherein the programme team will support 10 participants to develop and deliver coaching activities to local populations. Whilst at the time of writing these projects are in their relative infancy, it is likely that emergent good practice may lead to their expansion and help participants transition into sustained coaching activities thereafter.

3.4: Implications of the programme for key stakeholders in sport

3.4.1 Barriers and responses to creating a more ethnically diverse volunteer and paid coaching workforce.

The programme team referenced a series of key structural constraints to creating a more ethnically diverse volunteer and paid coaching workforce.

- **Firstly, the significant financial cost of NGB accredited coach education courses.** This was felt to be the case in relation to Level 1 and Level 2 (and other grassroots level) courses, and also Level 3 and Level 4 courses designed to empower coaches to make the transition from community to high performance coaching. The cost is prohibitive to populations experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, including those from ethnically diverse backgrounds with a limited likelihood of receiving renumeration for later coaching activities to off-set any initial financial outlay. Secondly, the programme team drew attention to the historically limited efforts of NGB's to provide targeted subsidies or related resources to increase accessibility for aspiring coaches experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, including those from ethnically diverse backgrounds.

- **Cultural constraints to creating a more ethnically diverse volunteer and paid coaching workforce.** Firstly, a lack of awareness amongst aspiring coaches from ethnically diverse backgrounds as to the processes through which to become volunteer or paid coaches. This was felt to be especially the case amongst coaches with limited experience of playing or coaching organised sports and consequently positioned outside of formalised insider community sports networks. Secondly, members of the programme team suggested that sports coaching had not traditionally been considered as a viable voluntary activity or career pathway amongst some sections of ethnically diverse communities. This was felt to be especially the case amongst some more religiously and culturally conservative populations and where aspiring women coaches were understood to face additional constraints across intersections of religion, culture, and gender.

4. PARTICIPANT FINDINGS – START OF PROGRAMME

4.1 Participant coach characteristics

Online survey

The start of programme survey was completed by 27 respondents.

In total, 3 (11.1%) coaches self-classified as White Other, including coaches of Romanian and Spanish heritage, and a further 2 (7.4%) coaches as Mixed Ethnicity, including coaches from White/Black Caribbean and White/Asian backgrounds. In total, 14 (51.8%) coaches self-classified as Asian or Asian British, including coaches of Pakistani, Indian and Chinese heritage, and a further 7 (25.9%) coaches as from Black Caribbean or Black African backgrounds. One (3.7%) coach preferred not to disclose their ethnicity. Whilst two-thirds (66.6%) of respondents were born in the UK, one-third (33.4%) were born in other countries, including Spain, Romania, Zambia, Ghana, Botswana, Nigeria, Pakistan, Japan, and Puerto Rico.

Telephone interviews

A sub-sample of coaches (n=13) were interviewed to explore their prior experiences of sports coaching and their motivations for being involved in the Sporting Communities pilot project. Overall, 5 (38.5%) coaches were aged between 18-25 years old, 6 (46.3%) between 36-45, and 2 (15.4%) between 56-65 years old. In total, 9 (69%) coaches identified their gender as male and 4 (31%) as female. This sub-sample of interviewees were drawn from a range of ethnic and religious backgrounds.

ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS

Age of coaches
- 10 (37.0%) between 18-25
- 11 (40.8%) between 36-45
- 3 (11.1%) between 56-65
- 3 (11.1%) preferred not to state their age

Gender of coaches
- 18 (66.7%) identified as male
- 9 (33.3%) identified as female
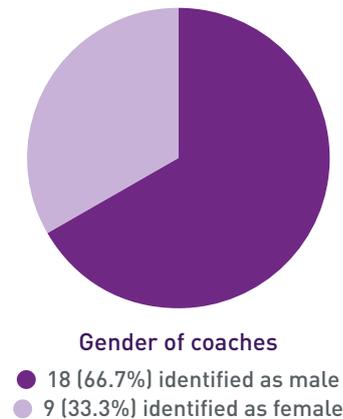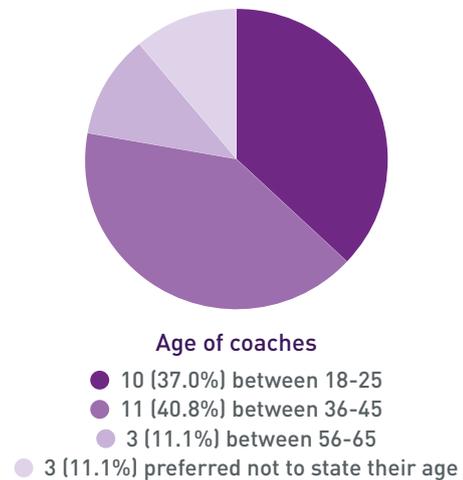
TABLE 1
Ethnicity of respondent coaches

ETHNICITY	NUMBER AND % OF COACHES
White Other	3 (11.1%)
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	2 (7.4%)
Asian or Asian British	14 (51.8%)
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	7 (25.9%)
Prefer not to say	1 (3.7%)

4.2 Barriers experienced by coaches

Within the online survey and via telephone interviews, coaches identified a range of barriers which were perceived to have constrained their progression as coaches. These barriers are categorised below as socio-economic/cultural constraints, limited knowledge/awareness, limited availability/accessibility, and negative experiences/exclusion.

Socio-economic/cultural constraints

Survey findings indicated that around one-half of coaches cited work/study pressures (n=12, 52.2%) and financial barriers (n=11, 47.8%), and a smaller number referred to transport and travel (n=7, 30.4%) and family obligations (n=4,17.4%) as constraints to coaching. Interview findings indicated that structural constraints of this kind were especially marked amongst coaches drawn from economically deprived locales and where local services

"When I look at the older generation of Asian parents, it's not a career that would even be considered. Priority is given to the legal profession and medicine rather than sports. It might just be that the older generations haven't really been involved in sports."

Coach, Start of Programme Interview

"I'll be honest with you, it's not something that the Asian community do. The Asian community now is so much different when I grew up in the 80s and the 90s, where it was, females didn't do sports. Like you were going to get married after school. It's like marriage and then you have kids and do that type of stuff. So, doing sports wasn't seen as something you did."

Coach, Start of Programme Interview

were limited. Further, some coaches reported that sports coaching had not traditionally been considered as a viable voluntary activity or career pathway amongst some sections of ethnically diverse communities. This was especially the case amongst South Asian groups where wider socio-cultural and familial pressures prioritised work and study over careers in sports. Such pressures were understood to disproportionately impact on some South Asian women coaches whose pathways into coaching were negotiated across intersections of gender, culture, religion, social class.

FIGURE 1
Socio-economic/cultural constraints for coaches
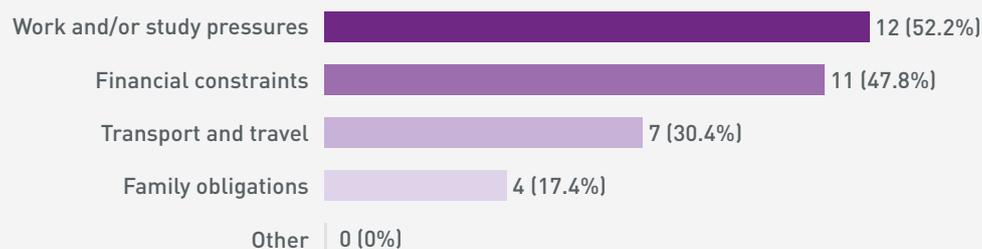
Work and/or study pressures	12 (52.2%)
Financial constraints	11 (47.8%)
Transport and travel	7 (30.4%)
Family obligations	4 (17.4%)
Other	0 (0%)

Multi answer: percentage of respondents who selected each answer option
(eg. 100% would represent that all this question's respondents chose that option)

Limited knowledge/awareness

Survey findings indicated that around two-thirds (n=15, 65.2%) of coaches cited limited knowledge of local coaching opportunities. Similar numbers of coaches also referred to limited knowledge of local coach development courses (n=14, 60.9%) and local coach development networks (n=14, 60.9%). Interview findings indicated that awareness issues of this kind were underscored by a lack of knowledge as to where to access relevant information regarding coaching opportunities at clubs, and the process for accessing and undertaking formalised coach education qualifications in particular sports. This was especially the case for coaches with limited if any experience of sports coaching at clubs and who were consequently positioned as marginal to established community sports networks with which they had little prior personal or cultural connection.

"We don't know what opportunities are available to us. So, if you don't know what opportunities are available to you, then it's not achievable."

Coach, Start of Programme Interview

"The networking is quite key in moving coaching forward because in most jobs things are always changing and progressing. So you need to keep the networks fresh so that you can keep up to date with knowledge and if you don't have a network you don't know about things."

Coach, Start of Programme Interview

FIGURE 2
Limited knowledge/awareness amongst coaches
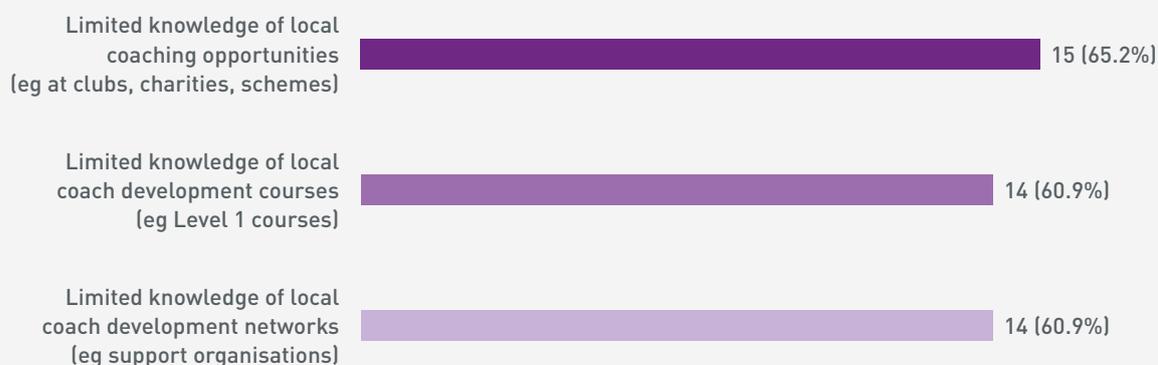
Limited knowledge of local coaching opportunities (eg at clubs, charities, schemes)	15 (65.2%)
Limited knowledge of local coach development courses (eg Level 1 courses)	14 (60.9%)
Limited knowledge of local coach development networks (eg support organisations)	14 (60.9%)

Multi answer: percentage of respondents who selected each answer option (eg. 100% would represent that all this question's respondents chose that option)

"Where I grew up there were no Community Coaches. So, all this is new to me. I didn't know there is these people that go out in the community and go and do activities. I thought you would have to have a PE degree to do it, so it's a lack of knowledge and awareness."

Coach, Start of Programme Interview

FIGURE 3
Limited availability/accessibility reported by coaches
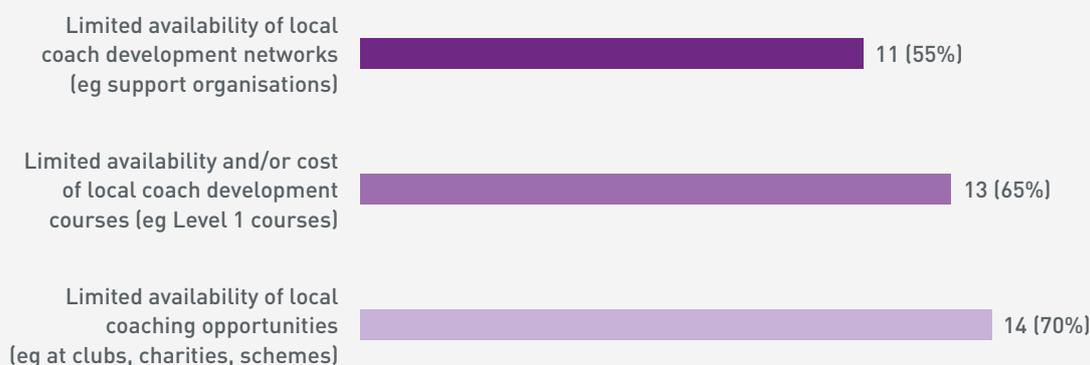
Limited availability of local coach development networks (eg support organisations) — 11 (55%)

Limited availability and/or cost of local coach development courses (eg Level 1 courses) — 13 (65%)

Limited availability of local coaching opportunities (eg at clubs, charities, schemes) — 14 (70%)

Multi answer: percentage of respondents who selected each answer option (eg. 100% would represent that all this question's respondents chose that option)

Limited availability/accessibility

Survey findings indicated that around two-thirds (n=14, 70%) of coaches cited the limited availability of local coaching opportunities, and limited availability and/or cost of local coach development courses (n=13, 65%) as impacting on access to coaching. More than one-half (n=11, 55%) of coaches also cited the limited availability of local coach development networks. Interview findings indicated that the lack of availability of coaching opportunities was underscored by the lack of clubs in some preferred sports and a lack of paid coaching opportunities at such clubs in some locales. These accessibility issues were especially marked amongst women coaches from ethnically diverse backgrounds in traditionally male and female sports contexts. Further, in some cases, coaches with accessible client groups of players, reported on the prohibitive cost of hiring appropriate facilities and limited access to lower cost or free to access facilities in the locales in which they were situated. Interviewee findings also indicated that the limited availability and accessibility of coach development courses tended to be underscored by key geographical and financial factors. For example, the lack of provision of coach education courses in the immediate or nearby vicinity and the largely prohibitive cost of such courses when delivered. The limited availability and accessibility of such courses was felt to be exacerbated further in some smaller, but

preferred, sports and in relation to more advanced or high-level coach education qualifications. The limited availability of coach development networks was also felt to have limited opportunities for networking, information sharing and mentoring support for coaches seeking to step onto and progress upwards on the sports coaching ladder.

"I have found volleyball to be very, very limited and I can barely find any paid coaching positions. Even for a local club – I can choose from three different teams – I was offered to coach but they don't pay. I believe the sport itself is a barrier here in the UK."

Coach, Start of Programme Interview

"Yeah, definitely it's been difficult getting into paid coaching, I think because my sport is rugby as well, I think there isn't that many opportunities to play sport as a woman. Rugby is a difficult environment for a woman, let alone a minority woman trying to coach."

Coach, Start of Programme Interview

"If the grassroots information is available, certainly, Asian communities love sport, certainly there's no reasons why coaching couldn't be part of that envelope. There's just not enough information out there. The general Asian public don't even know about coaching as a career."

Coach, Start of Programme Interview

FIGURE 4
Negative experiences/exclusion reported by coaches
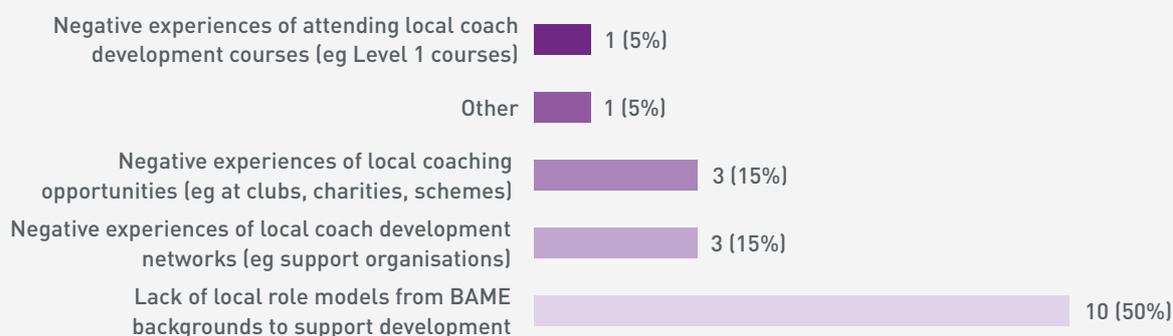
Negative experiences of attending local coach
development courses (eg Level 1 courses) — 1 (5%)

Other — 1 (5%)

Negative experiences of local coaching
opportunities (eg at clubs, charities, schemes) — 3 (15%)

Negative experiences of local coach development
networks (eg support organisations) — 3 (15%)

Lack of local role models from BAME
backgrounds to support development — 10 (50%)

*Multi answer: percentage of respondents who selected each answer option (eg. 100% would
represent that all this question's respondents chose that option)*

Negative experiences/exclusion

Survey findings indicated that a relatively small number of coaches cited negative experiences of local coaching opportunities (n=3, 15%), local coach development courses (n=1, 5%) and local coach development networks (n=3, 15%). Findings here are likely underscored in part by the low levels of coaches with awareness of or engaging in coaching and coach development activities of this kind and these issues were expanded on by the interview sub-sample. Further, one-half (n=10, 50%) of coaches alluded to a lack of local role models from ethnically diverse backgrounds to support the development of coaches. Interviewee findings indicated that negative experiences of local coaching opportunities, coach development courses and coach development networks were perceived by coaches to be underscored by the existence of implicit and subtle forms of racialised bias and stereotyping by white coaches, club members, and staff at local governing bodies. This was felt to have limited opportunities to access and undertake coaching and coach development courses and to have impacted most prominently on women coaches from ethnically diverse populations, especially South Asian women. These forms of access and treatment discrimination were perceived to be exacerbated by the lack of ethnic and gender diversity and predominantly white male landscape of local coaching networks. Within such 'traditional' white sporting spaces, coaches from ethnically diverse backgrounds were reported as being framed by key stakeholders as lacking the requisite

vocational acumen or cultural suitability to coach and to have been made to feel unwelcome in such contexts. Experiences of this kind were reported by coaches as impacting negatively on their self-confidence and self-efficacy and to have limited aspirations to seek out and engage in coaching and coach development activities in such environments in the past. This was especially the case for some women coaches from ethnically diverse populations who reported experiencing extended racialised and gendered exclusions and for other 'first generation' coaches with limited but developing English language skills.

"It has been a really big struggle for me (accessing paid coaching). I don't really know why but l feel it's to do with race and financial reason people who are not black themselves don't want to approach and employ a black person because they feel like they don't know what they are dealing with for example. They are afraid of what they see in the news and they're not sure what they will be confronted with."

Coach, Start of Programme Interview

"Clubs are not diverse, which I feel was a barrier in itself. You turn up and wonder what's going to happen."

Coach, Start of Programme Interview

"I've come across it all my life, being called things, they just say it because they hear people say it, but they don't realise how offensive it is, and that has made me nervous. I really am scared when they say some nasty things and this does concern me in a coaching position."

Coach, Start of Programme Interview

*"You learn from also helping others to develop and grow and things.
So sort of I'm that phase where I'm positioning myself in the club, but I lacked
confidence in doing that. I thought this course would be good to do that."*

Coach, Start of Programme Interview

4.3 Motivations for Participating in Coaching for All (CFA)

Within the online survey and via telephone interviews, coaches identified a range of motivations towards participating in the Coaching for All (CFA) programme. These motivations are categorised below in relation to; accessibility, learning and career.

Accessibility

Survey findings indicated that almost all coaches felt that opportunities to access and undertake Level 1 coaching courses (n=24, 88.9%), additional coach development activities (n=26, 96.3%), and coach placement activities (n=25, 92.6%) were 'important' or 'very important' motivations for taking part in the Coaching for All (CFA) programme. Similarly, almost all coaches felt that opportunities to access mentoring support and guidance (n=26, 96.3%) and engage with coaches with similar experiences and backgrounds (n=25, 92.6%) were 'important' or 'very important' motivating factors. Interview findings indicated that motivations of this kind were underscored by many of the accessibility and experiential barriers identified in the previous section and with respect to the limited knowledge or availability of opportunities and negative prior experiences within local sports coaching contexts. In this respect, coaches referred to motivations towards 'building confidence', 'developing skills', and 'trying things out' in a safe and supportive environment alongside coaches from similar experiential and demographic backgrounds and under the tutelage of qualified coach developers and mentors.

"I think it was a good opportunity to help build my confidence with other people that may be in a similar boat to me. Having that opportunity to try things out."

Coach, Start of Programme Interview

"This is a good opportunity for me to get back into coaching and sort of enhance my status and work on my desire to help others as well."

Coach, Start of Programme Interview

TABLE 2
Accessibility related motivations amongst coaches

	NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT	SOME IMPORTANCE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT
Opportunity to access and undertake Level 1 coaching courses	1 (3.7%)	2 (7.4%)	5 (18.5%)	19 (70.4%)
Opportunity to access and undertake additional coach development activities	0	1 (3.7%)	10 (37%)	16 (59.3%)
Opportunity to access and undertake coach placement activities	0	2 (7.4%)	9 (33.3%)	16 (59.3%)
Opportunity to access coach development and mentoring support and guidance	0	1 (3.7%)	7 (25.9%)	19 (70.4%)
Opportunity to engage with other coaches with similar experiences/backgrounds	0	2 (7.4%)	7 (25.9%)	18 (66.7%)

TABLE 3
Learning related motivations amongst coaches

	NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT	SOME IMPORTANCE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT
Opportunity to learn from qualified coach developers and mentors	0	1 (3.7%)	5 (18.5%)	21 (77.8%)
Opportunity to learn from other coaches with similar experiences/backgrounds	0	2 (7.4%)	8 (29.6%)	17 (63%)
Opportunity to improve knowledge and understanding of coaching (technical skills)	0	1 (3.7%)	4 (14.8%)	22 (81.5%)
Opportunity to improve knowledge and understanding of working with people (social skills)	0	4 (14.8%)	4 (14.8%)	19 (70.4%)
Opportunity to better support player and club development in local communities	0	3 (11.1%)	5 (18.5%)	19 (70.4%)

Learning

Survey findings indicated that almost all coaches felt that opportunities to learn from qualified coach developers and mentors (n=26, 96.3%) and other coaches with similar experiences and backgrounds (n=25, 92.6%) were 'important' or 'very important' motivations for taking part in the Coaching for All (CFA) programme. Similarly, almost all coaches felt that opportunities to improve knowledge and understanding of coaching (n=26, 96.3%) and working with people (n=23, 85.2%) were 'important' or 'very important' motivations for taking part in the Coaching for All (CFA) programme. The overwhelming majority of coaches also felt that opportunities to better support player and club development in local communities (n=24, 88.9%) were 'important' or 'very important' motivating factors. Interview findings indicated that motivations of this kind were underscored by both instrumental and altruistic factors. For example, coaches referred to aspirations towards developing requisite technical and social skill sets and to utilise these newly acquired coaching competencies to enhance local sporting provision to the benefit of ethnically diverse and other populations.

"I thought this was great opportunity to get to develop my skills and also to pass those skills onto the younger generation to get more BME communities involved in sport."

Coach, Start of Programme Interview

"I would like to build my skills on how I can make my sport more accessible to women and women of colour especially."

Coach, Start of Programme Interview

"I really want to do something within the area I live because I know it's something that is desperately needed, and I would like to set something up so I'm hoping the Sporting Communities project can help me with that."

Coach, Start of Programme Interview

Career

Survey findings indicated that almost all coaches felt that opportunities to enhance their coaching qualifications portfolio (n=24, 88.9%), enhance visibility and personal profile within local sports coaching networks (n=24, 88.9%), and enhance employability and access to paid coaching positions in local sports coaching (n=23, 85.2%) were 'important' or 'very important' motivations for taking part in the Coaching for All (CFA) programme. Similarly, most coaches felt that opportunities to increase the quantity and quality of voluntary coaching in local communities (n=25, 92.6%) and become a positive role model for others with similar experiences and backgrounds (n=26, 96.3%) were 'important' or 'very important' motivating factors. Interview findings indicated that motivations of this kind were informed by aspirations towards extending and formalising their experiential and vocational knowledge and to make the transition from 'outside' to 'inside' local coaching networks. In particular, the realisation of such motivations was expected to enable coaches to deliver higher quality coaching to relevant client groups across a range of voluntary and paid coaching settings.

"It's not the financial side of it that appeals to me. It's more in terms of the quality of the experience, in terms of the volunteering I do. So, I want it to be for a recognised organisation and I want it to be, I suppose, very well organised. It's more I want that support finding quality coaching roles."

Coach, Start of Programme Interview

"I'm hoping to gain accredited qualification that will give me the skills, the experience. I think that's key, the sort of knowledge to then go on and try to become a paid sports coach within the community. And I'm hoping within the next year that I can meet the course requirement and from there find some work on a part time basis to try and get into a coaching role."

Coach, Start of Programme Interview

TABLE 4
Career related motivations amongst coaches

	NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT	SOME IMPORTANCE	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT
Opportunity to enhance coaching qualifications portfolio	0	3 (11.1%)	5 (18.5%)	19 (70.4%)
Opportunity to increase quantity and quality of voluntary coaching in local communities	0	2 (7.4%)	10 (37%)	15 (55.6%)
Opportunity to be a positive role model for others with similar experiences/backgrounds	0	1 (3.7%)	5 (18.5%)	21 (77.8%)
Opportunity to enhance visibility and personal profile in local sports coaching networks	0	3 (11.1%)	8 (29.6%)	16 (59.3%)
Opportunity to enhance employability and access paid coaching in local sports coaching networks	0	4 (14.8%)	6 (22.2%)	17 (63%)

5. PARTICIPANT FINDINGS – END OF PROGRAMME

5.1 Coach characteristics

Online survey

The end of programme survey was completed by 20 coaches. Overall, 11 (55%) were aged between 18-25, 7 between 36-45 (35%) and 2 between 56-65 (10%). 12 coaches (60%) identified their gender as male and 8 (40%) as female.

In total, 3 (15%) coaches self-classified as White Other, including coaches of Romanian and Spanish heritage, and a further 3 (15%) coaches as Mixed Ethnicity, including coaches from White/Black Caribbean and White/Asian backgrounds. In total, 7 (35%) coaches self-classified as Asian or Asian British including coaches of Pakistani, Indian and Chinese heritage, and a further 4 (20%) coaches as from Black Caribbean or Black African backgrounds. Two (10%) coaches self-classified as ethnic other and one (5%) coach preferred not to disclose their ethnicity. Whilst around two-thirds (70%) of the coaches were born in the UK, around one-third (30%) were born in other countries, including: Spain, Romania, Zambia, Pakistan, Guinea, and Puerto Rico.

Focus groups

Focus groups were undertaken using an Appreciative Inquiry approach. This involved two repeat initial online focus group discussions in February and March 2021 which were attended by eleven coaches who had taken part in Coaching for All (CFA). Two follow-up online group discussion sessions were then undertaken which included eight out of the coaches who had taken part in the first focus groups and members of the Sporting Communities delivery team.

TABLE 5
Ethnicity of the End of Programme Survey Coach Respondents

ETHNICITY	NUMBER AND % OF COACHES
White Other	3 (15%)
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	3 (15%)
Asian or Asian British	7 (35%)
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	4 (20%)
Any other ethnic group	2 (10%)
Prefer not to say	1 (5%)

TABLE 6
Focus Group Participants

	SESSION 1	SESSION 2
Participant Coaches	11	8
Programme Leaders	0	2
Total	11	10

"When all the other stresses of life including work, university and family issues came up it kept me engaged in my ability to develop as a coach over the year. This increased my enthusiasm and confidence as a coach. There were also multiple instances where issues or topics covered came up and could enforce decisions I made or rearranged how I thought about an issue. The best part was being able to interact with other people and kept me optimistic about coaching."

Coach, Focus Group

"The programme has kept me sane throughout this pandemic."

Coach, Focus Group

*"A lot of credit has to go to the trainers... who did manage to keep us engaged...
To sort of sustain our attention for a whole year, virtually by introducing lots of
lots of experienced coaches from all different walks of life."*

Coach, Focus Group

5.2 Coaches experiences of taking part in Coaching for All (CFA)

Within the online survey and focus groups, coaches reflected on their experiences of taking part in the Coaching for All (CFA) programme. These experiences are categorised below as experiences of online-based delivery and learning, session-based delivery and learning, content-based delivery and learning, and programme team-based delivery and learning.

Online-based delivery and learning

Survey findings indicated that 12 (60%) coaches 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' and 5 (25%) 'strongly disagreed' that they had access to IT equipment needed to take part in the programme. To combat this, Sporting Communities provided laptops for those who had IT requirements. Further, 16 (80%) coaches 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' and 4 (20%) 'disagreed' or 'strongly disagreed' that they had a space within which to comfortably take part in online activities. In total, 12 (60%) coaches 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that the length of online sessions was about right, in comparison

to 5 (25%) coaches who were in disagreement with this statement. Further, whilst 5 (25%) coaches indicated that they struggled with the programme because it was online, 10 (50%) coaches did not report problems of this kind. Finally, overall, around two-thirds (n=14, 70%) of coaches indicated that they had achieved the learning they needed even though the course was online. In contrast, one-quarter of coaches (n=5, 25%) felt this wasn't the case, however there was an acknowledgement that course elements that would have improved learning; face-to-face delivery, NGB courses and work experiences were limited as a direct consequence of the Covid-19 restrictions.

Focus group findings indicated that coaches were understandably disappointed that the majority of delivery was online as this limited the ability to undertake practical and in-person sessions. However, being online allowed some coaches to attend more sessions than they would have if the sessions had all been face-to-face. For some coaches the programme helped them to navigate the stresses presented by the pandemic which was an unexpected benefit.

TABLE 7
Online-based based delivery and learning amongst coaches

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
I had access to the IT equipment I needed to take part in the programme	9 (45%)	3 (15%)	3 (15%)	0 (0%)	5 (25%)
I had a space where I could comfortably take part in the online activities	11 (55%)	5 (25%)	0 (0%)	1 (5%)	3 (15%)
The length of the online sessions was about right	8 (40%)	4 (20%)	3 (15%)	2 (10%)	3 (15%)
I struggled to engage with the programme because it was online	2 (10%)	3 (15%)	5 (25%)	5 (25%)	5 (25%)
I achieved the learning I needed even though the course was online	9 (45%)	5 (25%)	1 (5%)	2 (10%)	3 (15%)

Session-based delivery and learning

Survey findings indicated that 17 (85%) coaches 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' and 2 (10%) 'disagreed' that they felt included and valued throughout the programme. Further, 18 (90%) coaches 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that they felt comfortable contributing to the sessions, and 19 (95%) coaches 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' they felt comfortable asking questions in sessions. Similarly, 18 (90%) coaches 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that their views were listened to and considered during the sessions. In all three cases, no coaches disagreed with these statements. Finally, around three-fifths (n=12, 60%) of coaches felt that the number of participants in each session was about right. In contrast, one-fifth of coaches (n=4, 20%) felt this wasn't the case.

The focus group findings indicated coaches appreciated the dedication of the Sporting Communities staff which they believed was absolutely central to the success of the programme. The delivery staff adopted a flexible approach throughout the delivery of Coaching for All (CFA) combining practical, theory and enjoyable opportunities for coaches to engage in. In so doing they were able to facilitate an inclusive learning experience and build rapport with all those involved. The delivery team were described as approachable and caring staff who were able to motivate coaches and facilitate open discussions about the challenges coaches may experience in the future. It was noted by the coaches that the success of the programme was also reliant on the motivation and commitment of the coaches involved to make the programme a success.

"I've liked the aspect of meeting, of course, virtually meet and different types of people from all different walks of life. Everybody's had different stories to tell and things that have been brought to my attention. And so great trainers as well. And the people that are being bred in the programme and great learners."

Coach, Focus Group

"They've done a fantastic job in bringing everyone together from different backgrounds... and they recognise how important it is to have people from these different types of backgrounds within our within our communities delivering these coaching sessions. Because, you know... the BLM movement and everything else... You know, they... obviously clearly recognise the need for this. And, you know, they've done their job."

Coach, Focus Group

"It takes the participant's commitment and... being so motivated to want to get into coaching and... make a positive change as to the reason why this course has probably been as successful as it has been."

Coach, Focus Group

TABLE 8
Session-based delivery and learning amongst coaches

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
I felt included and valued throughout the programme	12 (60%)	5 (25%)	1 (5%)	2 (10%)	0 (0%)
I felt comfortable contributing to the sessions	12 (60%)	6 (30%)	2 (10%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
I felt comfortable asking questions in the sessions	16 (80%)	3 (15%)	1 (5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
My views were listened to and considered during the sessions	14 (70%)	4 (20%)	2 (10%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
The number of participants in each session was about right	9 (45%)	3 (15%)	4 (20%)	2 (10%)	2 (10%)

TABLE 9
Content-based delivery and learning amongst coaches

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
The content of the programme was relevant to my development as a coach	11 (55%)	3 (15%)	1 (5%)	2 (10%)	3 (15%)
It was valuable to involve stakeholders such as UK Coaching and Sporting Equals in the project	11 (55%)	3 (15%)	1 (5%)	0 (0%)	5 (25%)
The contributions from the guest speakers benefited me as a coach	11 (55%)	8 (40%)	0 (0%)	1 (5%)	0 (0%)
I valued the discussions with others taking part in the programme as part of my development as a coach	11 (55%)	8 (40%)	0 (0%)	1 (5%)	0 (0%)
The course could have been successfully delivered over a shorter timescale	1 (5%)	9 (45%)	7 (35%)	0 (0%)	3 (15%)

Content-based delivery and learning

Survey findings indicated that 14 (70%) coaches 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' and 5 (25%) 'disagreed' or 'strongly disagreed' that the content of the programme was relevant to their development as a coach. Further, 14 (70%) coaches 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' and 5 (25%) 'strongly disagreed' that it was valuable to involve stakeholders such as UK Coaching and Sporting Equals in the project. Almost all coaches (n=19, 95%) 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that the contributions from guest speakers benefited them as a coach. Similarly, 19 (95%) coaches 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that they valued the discussion with others taking part in the programmes as part of their development as a coach. In both cases, just one coach (5%) 'disagreed' with these statements. Finally, one-half (n=10, 50%) of coaches indicated that the course could have been successfully delivered over a shorter timescale, in comparison to 3 (15%) coaches who 'strongly disagreed' with this statement.

The focus groups revealed that the content of the programme was valuable as it enabled coaches to enhance their insight across a range of issues relevant to community sport, enabling them to plan their own clubs/sessions in the future. The delivery team were seen as experts who drew on their own extensive coaching experiences and provided a useful balance of insight into coaching community and elite sport. They also created opportunities for coaches to challenge and extend existing knowledge and develop their understanding on a range of issues including safeguarding, unconscious bias, adapting for inclusive sport and mental health awareness. A coach participant also suggested that the programme content could usefully include the perspectives of disabled or trans sports people as a way of promoting inclusion and diversity within sport.

"I think it's the diversity of things that we've done. So, we've had the opportunity to see coaches from other places. We've had the opportunity to challenge. We've had the opportunity to gain knowledge."

Coach, Focus Group

"It's made us aware of what we can do where or who to get in touch with."

Coach, Focus Group

Programme team-based delivery and learning

Survey findings indicated that 16 (80%) coaches 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' and 4 (20%) 'strongly disagreed' that the Sporting Communities Coaching for All (CFA) team met the challenges of the pandemic well when delivering the programme. Further, almost all coaches 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that the Sporting Communities Coaching for All (CFA) team had been both knowledgeable (n=19, 95%) and supportive (n=19, 95%) throughout the delivery of the programme. In contrast just one (5%) coach 'disagreed' with these statements. Finally, the overwhelming majority (n=19, 95%) of coaches 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that the Sporting Communities Coaching for All (CFA) team had helped them to develop as a coach.

The focus groups supported the survey findings and indicated that coaches appreciated the significant efforts that the delivery team exerted to make the programme a success in difficult circumstances. The coaches appreciated the varied and extensive experience that the delivery team brought to the programme. They also appreciated the contribution of other experts that contributed to the programme.

"The delivery of the course was done well under the circumstances [pandemic and lockdown]... Really managed to keep us engaged."

Coach, Focus Group

"I just want to add that I learned what to be professional is with them. They were 100% professional. Every time you need them they were there."

Coach, Focus Group

"Access to the coaches, that's been really good to listen to their journeys...They've been doing these virtual challenges and where you have to do them. And I've come from a no coaching background. Right. Those challenges have helped me to then have the confidence to coach. I've been doing some online coaching."

Coach, Focus Group

"We've just seemed to have had a lot of opportunity, even though it's locked down. They've made the best out of a bad situation and we've managed to still learn... They couldn't have done any more."

Coach, Focus Group

TABLE 10
Programme team-based delivery and learning amongst coaches

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
The Sporting Communities Coaching for All (CFA) team met the challenges of the pandemic well when delivering the programme	11 (55%)	5 (25%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4 (20%)
The Sporting Communities Coaching for All (CFA) team were supportive throughout	14 (70%)	5 (25%)	0 (0%)	1 (5%)	0 (0%)
The Sporting Communities Coaching for All (CFA) team were knowledgeable throughout	14 (70%)	5 (25%)	0 (0%)	1 (5%)	0 (0%)
The Sporting Communities Coaching for All (CFA) team helped me to develop as a coach	13 (65%)	6 (30%)	1 (5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

TABLE 11
Accessibility related experiences amongst coaches

	1 NOT SUCCESSFUL	2	3	4	5 VERY SUCCESSFUL
Access and undertake Level 1 or 2 NGB coaching courses	1 (5%)	1 (5%)	0 (0%)	6 (30%)	12 (60%)
Access and undertake additional coach development activities	0 (0%)	4 (20%)	1 (5%)	5 (25%)	10 (50%)
Access and undertake coach placement activities	1 (5%)	2 (10%)	4 (20%)	4 (20%)	9 (45%)
Access coach development and mentoring support and guidance	0 (0%)	1 (5%)	1 (5%)	7 (35%)	11 (55%)
Engage with other coaches with similar experiences/backgrounds	0 (0%)	3 (15.8%)	3 (15.8%)	3 (15.8%)	10 (52.6%)

5.3 Programme effectiveness

Through the online survey and focus groups, coaches reflected on the effectiveness of the Coaching for All (CFA) programme. Within the survey, reflection was across a continuum with 1 as 'not successful' and 2-5 as varying degrees of success with 5 constituting 'very successful'.

Accessibility

Survey findings indicated that almost all coaches (n=19, 95%) felt that the Coaching for All (CFA) programme had been 'successful' in providing opportunities to access and undertake Level 1 or 2 NGB coaching courses, including 12 (60%) coaches who felt it had been 'very successful'. Similarly, almost all coaches (n=19, 95%) felt that the Coaching for All (CFA) programme had been 'successful' in providing opportunities to undertake coach placement activities, including 9 (45%) coaches who felt it had been 'very successful'. Further, all coaches reported that efforts to provide opportunities to access and undertake additional coach development activities (n=20, 100%), access coach development and mentoring support and guidance (n=20, 100%), and engage with other coaches with similar experiences/backgrounds (n=19, 100%) had been 'successful'. In each of these three cases around one-half (n=10, 50%, to n=11, 55%) of coaches indicated such efforts had been 'very successful'.

"It gives you that opportunity to sort of meet other people, hear their coaching experiences. You know people from different ages, different backgrounds."

Coach, Focus Group

The focus group findings confirmed that access to qualifications and developmental support was integral to the programme's effectiveness because these opportunities were essential to secure coaches' progression in the future. Another important factor that coaches identified as significantly impacting on their development as coaches was developing their understanding of the importance of accessing networks. Coaches were supported in gaining access to these networks by Sporting Communities brokering these connections. The ability of the delivery team to support the development of connections and build bridges between participants and other organisations was highly valued by the participants in Coaching for All (CFA). Engaging with other coaches from ethnically diverse communities from different sports involved in the programme was also highly valued by the coaches as this provided them with new insights from different sports that enabled them to reflect on their own practice.

Learning

Survey findings indicated that all coaches felt that the Coaching for All (CFA) programme had been 'successful' in providing opportunities to learn from qualified coach developers and mentors (n=20, 100%), including 11 (55%) who felt it had been 'very successful'. Similarly, all coaches (n=20, 100%) felt that the Coaching for All (CFA) programme had been 'successful' in providing opportunities to learn from other coaches with similar experiences/backgrounds, including 9 (45%) coaches who felt it had been 'very successful'. Further, all coaches reported that the programme had been 'successful' in providing opportunities to improve their knowledge and understanding of coaching (n=19, 100%) and knowledge and understanding of working with people (n=20, 100%). In both cases, more than two-thirds of coaches (n=13, 68.4%, and n=14, 70% respectively) reported efforts on this score had been 'very successful'. Finally, all coaches reported on the success of the Coaching for All (CFA) programme in providing opportunities to better support player and club development in local communities, including around one-third (35%) of coaches who felt efforts of this kind had been 'very successful'.

"It's yeah, the information is the information which we never knew existed. And the networking, social networking and the directions and... guide us especially. Guidance is very important for me... people that have a like-minded to towards helping others and helping make things happen for a better place and better environment and opportunity."

Coach, Focus Group

"Giving me an insight of what I need to do apart from the coaching of the sport itself."

Coach, Focus Group

The focus group findings also indicated that coaches felt they had gained insight that would enhance their coaching in the future. This learning was achieved through the taught elements of the programme and through the experiential and discussion opportunities with other coaches and experts. Coaches described how they had a much greater understanding of what was needed in order to achieve their future coaching aspirations and of the actions required in order to make these a reality.

TABLE 12
Learning related experiences amongst coaches

	1 NOT SUCCESSFUL	2	3	4	5 VERY SUCCESSFUL
Learn from qualified coach developers and mentors	0 (0%)	3 (15%)	2 (10%)	4 (20%)	11 (55%)
Learn from other coaches with similar experiences/backgrounds	0 (0%)	3 (15%)	2 (10%)	6 (30%)	9 (45%)
Improve knowledge and understanding of coaching (technical skills)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (10.5%)	4 (21.1%)	13 (68.4%)
Improve knowledge and understanding of working with people (social skills)	0 (0%)	1 (5%)	3 (15%)	2 (10%)	14 (70%)
Opportunity to better support player and club development in local communities	0 (0%)	2 (10%)	4 (20%)	7 (35%)	7 (35%)

TABLE 13
Career related experiences amongst coaches

	1 NOT SUCCESSFUL	2	3	4	5 VERY SUCCESSFUL
Opportunity to enhance coaching qualifications portfolio	1 (5%)	1 (5%)	3 (15%)	4 (20%)	11 (55%)
Opportunity to increase quantity and quality of voluntary coaching in local communities	0 (0%)	1 (5%)	7 (35%)	4 (20%)	8 (40%)
Opportunity to be a positive role model for others with similar experiences/backgrounds	0 (0%)	3 (15%)	3 (15%)	5 (25%)	9 (45%)
Opportunity to enhance visibility and personal profile in local sports coaching networks	1 (5%)	3 (15%)	2 (10%)	5 (25%)	9 (45%)
Opportunity to enhance employability and access paid coaching in local sports coaching networks	0 (0%)	2 (10%)	4 (20%)	5 (25%)	9 (45%)

Career

Survey findings indicated that almost all coaches (n=19, 95%) reported that the Coaching for All (CFA) programme had been 'successful' in providing opportunities to enhance their coaching qualifications portfolio, including 11 (55%) coaches who felt it had been 'very successful'. Further, all coaches indicated that the Coaching for All (CFA) programme had been 'successful' in providing opportunities to increase the quantity and quality of voluntary coaching in local communities and to become a positive role model for others with similar experiences and backgrounds. In both cases, around two-fifths of coaches felt the programme had been 'very successful' in this respect (n=8, 40%, and n=9, 45%). Almost all coaches (n=19, 95%) felt that the Coaching for All (CFA) programme had been 'successful' in providing opportunities to enhance visibility and personal profile in local sports coaching networks and all coaches (n=20, 100%) with respect to providing opportunities to enhance employability and access to paid coaching in local sports coaching networks. In both cases, more than two-fifths (n=9, 45%) felt that such efforts had been 'very successful'.

"I hope I can, you know, go on to give back to the community."

Coach, Focus Group

"The experience, the ability to build relationships, you know, be able to connect with young people... on a level. I think that's something that, you know, I can... bring to my coaching style."

Coach, Focus Group

"To provide a safe and encouraging space and opportunities for people to engage in sport and feel recognised."

Coach, Focus Group

The focus group findings indicated that the coaches felt they were now well positioned to capitalise on their experiences of Coaching for All (CFA) in the future and make a difference in sport and in their communities. For some coaches aspirations were to undertake more paid coaching whilst other coaches wished primarily to continue as volunteers thereby indicating that coaching pathways are unique and often involve a combination of both paid and voluntary roles.

5.4 Positive impacts and future aspirations

Within the online survey and focus groups, coaches reflected on the impacts of participation in the Coaching for All (CFA) programme and future aspirations towards sports coaching.

Positive impacts and future aspirations

Survey findings indicated that 18 (90%) coaches 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' and just two (10%) coaches 'disagreed' or 'strongly disagreed' that they now feel more confident in their abilities as a coach as a result of participating in the Coaching for All (CFA) programme. Similarly, 17 (85%) coaches 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' and just one (5%) coach 'strongly disagreed' that they now feel confident when delivering sport or physical activity sessions. Further, 15 (75%) coaches and 18 (90%) coaches respectively 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that they are now able to coach to a standard they are pleased with and believe they are now able to encourage people who are inactive to be more active. In both cases, just one (5%) coach 'strongly disagreed' with these statements. Similarly, the majority of coaches 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that they are confident they could be a paid coach in the future (n=17, 85%) and believe there are opportunities

to become a paid coach if they wish to pursue this path (n=16, 80%). Just two (10%) coaches and one (5%) coach respectively 'disagreed' or 'strongly disagreed' with these statements. Only one coach strongly disagreed with the statements in Table 14 and there was not an opportunity to explain their choice of response. However, this coach joined the programme with the expressed intention of becoming a volunteer coach rather than a paid coach.

The focus group findings indicated that coaches believed that their future success was reliant on there being opportunities for them to continue to develop their skills and experiences and compensate for missed opportunities caused by the lockdowns. They noted that opportunities to progress through the coaching levels were important in creating a more diverse coaching workforce along with the resources to allow this to happen. It was also suggested that robust apprenticeships and mentoring within sport would be beneficial in creating a more diverse coaching workforce alongside resources to help community coaches understand what development pathways exist and how they can progress within coaching to become paid coaches. Another suggestion was the provision of extra support for newly qualified coaches,

TABLE 14
Positive impacts and future aspirations for coaches

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
I feel more confident in my own abilities as a coach now	8 (40%)	10 (50%)	0 (0%)	1 (5%)	1 (5%)
I feel confident when delivering sport or physical activity sessions	8 (40%)	9 (45%)	2 (10%)	0 (0%)	1 (5%)
I am able to coach to a standard I am pleased with	6 (30%)	9 (45%)	4 (20%)	0 (0%)	1 (5%)
I believe that I will be able to encourage people who are inactive to be more active	10 (50%)	8 (40%)	1 (5%)	0 (0%)	1 (5%)
I am confident that I could be a paid coach in the future	8 (40%)	9 (45%)	1 (5%)	1 (5%)	1 (5%)
I believe there are opportunities to become a paid coach if I wish to pursue this	11 (55%)	5 (25%)	3 (15%)	0 (0%)	1 (5%)

TABLE 15
Positive impacts and future aspirations for Coaching for All (CFA)

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
I have developed as a coach as a result of taking part in Coaching for All (CFA)	13 (65%)	5 (25%)	1 (5%)	1 (5%)	0 (0%)
I feel optimistic that I will be able to put the things I have learnt into practice as a coach when sport resumes	13 (65%)	6 (30%)	1 (5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
I feel empowered by the programme to pursue my future goals as a coach	14 (70%)	4 (20%)	1 (5%)	1 (5%)	0 (0%)
The Coaching for All (CFA) programme has helped me progress my coaching career	9 (45%)	10 (50%)	1 (5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
I would recommend others to take part in Coaching for All (CFA) in the future	16 (80%)	3 (15%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (5%)
I would like to see courses like this made available to participants whose main barriers to coaching are financial constraints regardless of their ethnicity	16 (80%)	3 (15%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (5%)

including language support overcoming potential barriers to entering into coaching. Coaches also indicated that it is important that the coaching workforce in schools is also more diverse as for many children this site will be their most significant experience of sport.

Positively, almost all coaches indicated that they 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that they have developed as a coach as a result of taking part in Coaching for All (CFA) (n=18, 90%) and that the programme has helped them to progress their career (n=19, 95%). Further, almost all (n=19, (95%) coaches 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that they feel optimistic they will be able to put into practice the things they have learnt once sport resumes after the COVID-19 pandemic. Similarly, 18 (90%) coaches 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that they now feel empowered to pursue their goals as a coach in the future. The overwhelming majority of coaches 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed'

that they would recommend others to take part in Coaching for All (CFA) in the future (n=19, 95%) and that they would like to see courses like this made available to participants whose main barriers to coaching are financial constraints regardless of their ethnicity (n=19, 95%). Overall, just one coach (5%) 'disagreed' or 'strongly disagreed' with four of the above six statements.

The focus groups confirmed that coaches were very keen to maximise the opportunity to create a more diverse coaching workforce at all levels of sport to demonstrate that coaching pathways are open to all. Despite this they suggested that achieving their aspirations would require tackling unconscious bias, eradicating racism within sport and ensuring that the coaching workforce reflects the communities in which sports clubs are operating. They shared concerns that players and coaches from ethnically diverse backgrounds often become

excluded from sport because they do not feel welcome in sports clubs. Further, that often they do not have the opportunity to influence decision-making within these sport clubs resulting in lower participation rates and talent within ethnically diverse communities going unidentified. Coaches suggested that greater equality within sports club management structures was needed to avoid the inner circle approach where only people and their families within insider networks take on management roles and removing politics within clubs that protect the status quo and stall attempts to be more diverse and inclusive. They were also keen to see a wider range of sports and coaching opportunities to be available to fully maximise opportunities to utilise the enthusiasm and skills that exist within ethnically diverse communities. Coaches also suggested that access to future programmes should be open more widely to all coaches experiencing financial barriers.

Some coaches hoped to establish their own sports clubs as they recognised that this may be a more effective way of achieving the desired change. However, they acknowledged that this required particular skills and knowledge in respect of governance, administration and understanding key decision-making processes within funding organisations and local authorities to support clubs in best serving their wider communities. Focus group participants also suggested that accessing resources for new clubs would be very difficult because they would be competing against clubs better placed to access the funding because of their experience of completing successful bids. Coaches suggested that more guidance and support was needed on how to navigate the existing systems and for those not familiar with the systems. They also suggested that those responsible for awarding funding should actively aim to prevent discrimination when making funding decisions.

"I think by being in this position now where hopefully I can go out and start coaching... I'm hoping through this and... I'm hoping that Sporting Communities carry on with this type of course, the more we will start seeing more and more young people from different backgrounds making it to the top, which is something that I'd like to see within my lifetime."

Coach, Focus Group

6. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

The Coaching for All (CFA) programme team, Sport England, Sporting Equals, UK Coaching and NGB's might wish to consider the following recommendations for good practice in relation to the future delivery of the Coaching for All (CFA) programme.

Increasing accessibility and awareness

- Review and broaden recruitment practices to include participants from ethnically diverse and white communities experiencing multiple forms of marginalisation across intersections of ethnicity, gender and social class, and with a revised emphasis on promoting improved inter-ethnic and gendered relations between different groups.

- Review and develop recruitment practices to ensure the programme recruits participants with strong aspirations to develop as coaches and deliver voluntary and paid coaching in community sports settings, and provide clear guidance around programme processes, activities and expectations.

- Review and ensure the provision of subsidies, mentoring and resource support for participants to access and undertake NGB accredited Level 1 and Level 2 coach education courses, and ensure the priority allocation of participants at courses of this kind.

- Review and undertake targeted educational activities designed to promote coaching as a viable career pathway for ethnically diverse populations and emphasise the benefits of cultural diversity as means through which to enhance the operational capacity and effectiveness of local sports coaching networks.

Enabling learning and career development

- Review and extend the programme content to fulfil requirements for accreditation as a generic community coach award and adapt existing delivery mechanisms to include blended online and in-person learning with an increased emphasis on the provision of practical sessions.

- Review and develop a programme of blended online and in-person learning which builds on the efforts of the programme delivery team and is supported by specialist guest speakers and coaches drawn from across the UK sports coaching landscape.

- Review and establish a structured coach placement programme to ensure that participants have opportunities to undertake experientially rewarding and vocationally relevant coaching activities, and develop clear programme exit strategies to support the transition of participants into real-life community sports coaching settings.

- Review and develop stronger connections between the programme and local sports coaching networks to enable pathways of progression into voluntary and paid coaching for participants. Proposed activities might include hosting networking events to 'match-up' newly skilled participants with coaching opportunities at more local sports clubs.

Ensuring sustainability and sharing good practice

- Develop a holistic and joined up approach to EDI work in sports at a national level and with specific regard to supporting work to engage and develop ethnically diverse and white communities experiencing multiple forms of marginalisation across intersections of ethnicity, gender and social class in sports coaching.

- Ensure that longer term funding and in-kind support from national organisations such as Sport England, Sporting Equals, UK Coaching and NGBs is provided to community sports agencies with the local knowledge and expertise to recruit, retain and develop ethnically diverse and white coaches drawn from socio-economically deprived locales.

- Ensure that community sports agencies have the financial security and operational flexibility to make a meaningful and sustainable impact in creating a more equitable, inclusive and ethnically diverse voluntary and paid coaching workforce to the benefit of local populations and community sports networks.

- Ensure that the operational learning and experiential outcomes engendered by the Coaching for All (CFA) programme are shared as a model of good equality practice in sports coaching, and which has transferability as a mechanism through which to engage and develop similarly marginalised groups in different locales and sporting contexts.

"I think it's important at all levels of education, you know, to go into an environment and feel like you can connect with your teachers... So, I think for a lot of children, if they don't see someone that you know resembles them or has a similar life experience to them, it can put them off... So, I think trying to incorporate that with sport and creating those positive experiences for them will, ultimately, like ultimately lead to them going on to play sport, you know, up the ladder."

Coach, Focus Group

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