



TACKLING

ANTISEMITISM

IN FOOTBALL:

A guide for safety officers and stewards





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A large crowd of football fans cheering with their arms raised. The image is in black and white, with a large blue number '1' overlaid on the left side.

1

Introduction: The Jewish Community and Football

Jewish people (or “Jews”) have a long connection to football in Britain as players, fans, managers, directors and owners.

All professional clubs have Jewish fans and there are many amateur Jewish football teams and players in Sunday league football.

However, antisemitic chanting, comments or violence can make Jewish people feel unsafe in football. This can force some to hide the fact they are Jewish or even to stop participating altogether.

We all have a role to play in making football a welcoming environment where everyone, including Jewish fans, players and officials etc. can enjoy participating free from harassment, abuse or discrimination. This guide is designed to help match day stewards and safety officers understand and recognise antisemitic abuse, and to know how to respond to it when it occurs.

A large crowd of football fans cheering with their arms raised. The image is in blue and white, with a large blue number '2' overlaid on the left side.

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What is Judaism?

Judaism is the religion of the Jewish people. Almost 4,000 years old, it is one of the oldest religious traditions still practised today. Its values and history are a major part of the foundations of Christianity and Islam.

There are approximately 15 million Jewish people in the world, around 300,000 of whom live in Britain. Jews live in every part of the UK, with the biggest communities in London and Manchester.

The extent to which individual Jews actually practise Judaism as a religion varies widely, from those who observe as many of the laws and commandments of Judaism as possible, to those who do not observe the religious laws but who still feel strongly Jewish.

Many Jews feel a strong attachment to Jewish culture and identity (including an attachment to Israel) even if they are not religiously observant.

Some Jews wear distinctive religious clothing, including a head covering such as a *kippah* (skullcap) or black hat, or a tasselled garment, known as a *tzitzit*, worn under the shirt. However, many Jews dress in a completely secular (non-religious) way and are not visibly Jewish.

Many Jews follow the dietary laws of kosher food, which means that they do not eat pig products or shellfish, and that meat must be prepared in a certain way.

Observant Jews will not work, drive or attend a match on a Saturday (the Jewish Sabbath and day of rest), but many Jews will happily do so.

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The Holocaust

The Holocaust was the systematic, deliberate attempt by Nazi Germany to murder every Jewish person in Europe during World War Two. The Nazis also persecuted others, such as lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGB&T) people, Roma and a number of other groups, but the main focus of their hatred was towards Jews.

Nazi propaganda encouraged people to hate Jews and to see them as an enemy that needed to be exterminated. They began by forcing Jews out of certain professions, passing laws restricting their rights and encouraging boycotts of their businesses. The Nazi campaign gradually became more violent: on 9 November 1938 a coordinated night of violence, known as *Kristallnacht*, saw 91 Jews murdered, 30,000 arrested and nearly 200 synagogues destroyed across Germany and Austria.

When the Nazis occupied other countries in Europe they put the Jews who lived there into ghettos or concentration camps, where many died of starvation or disease. Most Jewish victims of the Holocaust were killed in mass shootings or deported to death camps, where they were gassed. The largest of these was Auschwitz-Birkenau in Poland, where over 1.1 million people were killed – 90 per cent of whom were Jews.

In total, around 6 million Jews were killed in the Holocaust, including 1.5 million children. In Britain, the Holocaust is remembered every year on 27 January, Holocaust Memorial Day, which is the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz in 1945.

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Antisemitism and Football

Antisemitism is hostility, hatred, abuse or discrimination towards Jewish people. It has existed for 2,000 years and caused the persecution and killing of Jews, culminating in the Holocaust.

Today, antisemitic discrimination might include:

- antisemitic insults such as “Yid” and “Kike”, or Nazi ‘Heil Hitler’ salutes and displaying of swastikas
- stereotypes or conspiracy theories about Jews – for example, the idea that Jews love money, are mean, wealthy, powerful or only care about other Jews. There are also antisemitic stereotypes about Jews’ physical appearance, such as the idea that they are ugly or have big noses
- songs about Hitler, the Holocaust and Auschwitz, or making a hissing noise to imitate the sound of the gas chambers that the Nazis used to murder Jews during the Holocaust. Other antisemitic chants make fun of the fact Jewish men are circumcised. Denial of the Holocaust is also a form of antisemitism.

The word ‘Jew’ is not in itself an insult, but is sometimes used in an insulting or abusive way e.g. “bloody Jews” or “such a Jew”.

Unchallenged, antisemitic discrimination can deter Jewish people from participating in football and creates an unsafe atmosphere for everyone. It can damage the reputation of your club and encourage discrimination against anybody who is perceived as ‘different’.

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The Y Word

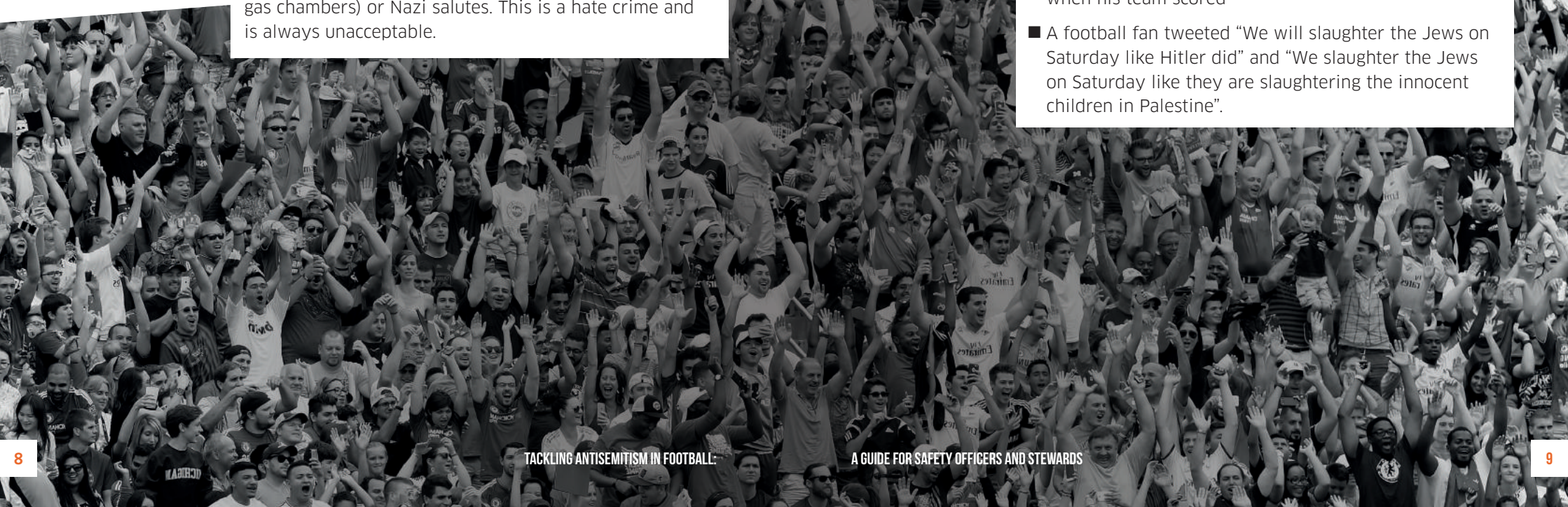
The word 'Yid' originated as an antisemitic insult used by fascists (far-right political groups) in the 1930s and is still used today in an antisemitic way that causes offence to Jews.

It is never acceptable to use the word 'Yid' or 'Yiddo' in an insulting way. This is antisemitic, especially if used with swear words or other abusive language. Even if the term is used on its own, without additional swear words, Jewish people may find the term offensive.

Sometimes the word 'Yid' or 'Yiddo' is responded to with antisemitic insults and songs, such as chants about Auschwitz, a hissing noise (imitating the sound of the gas chambers) or Nazi salutes. This is a hate crime and is always unacceptable.

Examples of antisemitism in English professional football:

- Two spectators were arrested for chanting “*gas the Jews*”, making Nazi salutes and making hissing sounds. Both were convicted of a religiously aggravated public order offence and were banned from attending football matches in Britain and abroad for three years
- A spectator was heard shouting “*C'mon, let's beat the f***ing Jews*” and “*They should have all gone to the f***ing gas chambers*”. The incident was reported to Kick It Out by a Jewish fan who was sat nearby with his 13-year-old son
- A spectator shouted, “*Take that Auschwitz c***s, Yiddos*” at opposition fans and gave a Nazi salute when his team scored
- A football fan tweeted “*We will slaughter the Jews on Saturday like Hitler did*” and “*We slaughter the Jews on Saturday like they are slaughtering the innocent children in Palestine*”.



What the law says about antisemitism

All forms of discrimination, including antisemitism, are against the law in the UK.

The Equality Act 2010 protects all people from less favourable treatment – or discrimination – on the grounds of race (including skin colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins) as well as on the grounds of religion or belief. UK hate crime law recognises Jews as both a faith and a race or ethnic group.

So, unfair treatment of somebody because they are Jewish is discrimination on the grounds of race or ethnicity, and/or religion or belief. This is unlawful.

The Equality Act 2010 also protects people from antisemitic discrimination even if they are not Jewish. For example, if a person who is not Jewish experiences antisemitic abuse because they attend a match with Jewish people or because people think they might be Jewish, they are equally protected by the legislation.

In 2016, the UK became one of the first countries to formally adopt a definition of what constitutes antisemitism. The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition – already used by police forces – explains antisemitism as:

“...a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”

The Public Order Act 1986

Under the Public Order Act 1986, racial hatred is defined as “hatred against a group of persons [...] defined by reference to colour, race, nationality (including citizenship) or ethnic or national origins”. This includes hatred against Jewish people.

An antisemitic hate incident is any action which the victim or others believe was motivated by prejudice, hostility or hatred of someone because they are Jewish. At a football match this might include:

- verbal abuse such as name-calling, insults, threats and offensive jokes
- circulating literature, such as scripts for chants, which include offensive language about Jewish people
- physical attacks such as punching, pushing or shoving
- deliberately preventing someone from getting to and from their seat
- vandalism or theft of property.

Not all antisemitic hate incidents are unlawful, but they should always be reported to the stewards, safety officers, the club or the police.

What English football says about antisemitism

English football is proud to be a diverse game which is played, followed and supported by millions of people from a wide range of cultures, communities, identities and backgrounds. However, sometimes these diverse identities are used by some spectators as a means by which to mock, insult or attack other fans and players from opposition teams.

The Football (Offences) Act 1991 outlaws antisemitic behaviour at football matches, grounds and stadia and may result in a criminal prosecution. It states that “[it] is an offence to engage or take part in chanting of an indecent or racist nature at a designated football match”. The term “of a racist nature” means “consisting of or including matter which is threatening, abusive or insulting to a person by reason of his colour, race, nationality (including citizenship) or ethnic or national origins”, therefore including Jewish people.

The Rules of the Association – the rules and regulations which govern football in England – explain clubs’ responsibilities to address any discriminatory behaviour, including antisemitic behaviour, from spectators, and the sanctions for failure to do so.

Rule E20 and E21:

Rule E20 states that each Affiliated Association, Competition and Club shall be responsible for ensuring:

“[a club’s]...spectators, and all persons purporting to be its supporters or followers, conduct themselves in an orderly fashion and refrain from any one or combination of the following: improper, violent, threatening, abusive, indecent, insulting or provocative words or behaviour, (including, without limitation, where any such conduct, words or behaviour includes a reference, whether express or implied, to any one or more of ethnic origin, colour, race, nationality, religion or belief, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or disability) whilst attending at [...] a Match in which it is involved, whether on its own ground or elsewhere;”

Where general misconduct occurs, sanctions may be avoided where a club can demonstrate that it would not have been able to prevent it. However, the same is not true of discriminatory misconduct.

Rule E21 explains that:

“this defence shall not apply where the Misconduct by spectators or any other person purporting to be a supporter or follower of the Club included a reference, whether express or implied, to any one or more of ethnic origin, colour, race, nationality, religion or belief, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or disability.”

So, where spectators participate in antisemitic behaviour, a club may be sanctioned regardless of its efforts to prevent or respond to it.

Clubs themselves also possess the power to ban perpetrators of discriminatory behaviour from their stadia. Ground regulations state that “Racial Abuse and Homophobic abuse; chanting or harassment is strictly forbidden and will result in arrest and/or ejection from the Ground. The Club may impose a ban for one or more matches.”

The role of stewards in tackling antisemitic behaviour

Stewards play an important role in ensuring the safety of spectators before, during and after a match, in and outside the stadium. This includes identifying and responding to antisemitic behaviour.

It's therefore essential that stewards understand the different forms antisemitic behaviour might take at football matches, how it impacts on the Jewish community and, as with all other forms of discrimination, what to do if they see or hear it, or if it is reported to them.

Stewards should make sure they have read and understood:

- the club's ground regulations
- the club's equality policy
- the club's customer charter which explains what behaviour is acceptable and unacceptable
- the advice in this guide on why and how to challenge antisemitic behaviour in or around the stadium

If you hear spectators using antisemitic language (including hissing noises) or making antisemitic gestures:

- if possible, alert your supervisor
- accompanied by a fellow steward, approach the individual(s) and explain that their behaviour is against club regulations
- ask them to refrain and warn them that if they continue they may be ejected from the premises
- make a record of the behaviour and where they are in the stands
- ask for any cameras to be repositioned to monitor their behaviour

If the language persists:

- If possible, alert your supervisor
- accompanied by a fellow steward, approach the individual(s) again and explain to them that their behaviour is unacceptable at the club
- inform them that you will report their behaviour to the ground safety officer and that they might be asked to leave the stands with the possibility of further action being taken
- make a further record of the incident and report it to your supervisor, which they can then escalate to the ground safety officer
- if necessary, ask your supervisor or the safety officer to inform a police officer

If you hear spectators participating in antisemitic chanting:

- make a record of the language used, where in the stands it is taking place and, if possible, the approximate seat number or identity of any individual perpetrators you can identify
- ask for any cameras to be repositioned to monitor their behaviour
- if possible, approach any individuals involved, ask them to refrain from chanting and explain that it is against club rules
- inform them that their behaviour is being monitored on camera
- to discourage further unrest, let nearby spectators know about the situation and that it is being addressed
- if possible, ask the match day announcer to make a tannoy announcement that all forms of discriminatory chanting are unacceptable at the match and are an arrestable offence

If the chanting persists:

- accompanied by a fellow steward, approach any individual perpetrators you can identify and explain to them that their behaviour is unacceptable at the club
- inform them that you will have to report their behaviour to the ground safety officer and police, that they might be asked to leave the stands, with the possibility of further action being taken
- make a further record of the incident and report it to the safety officer and, if necessary, the police

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Tackling antisemitism: 10 things to remember

1. Antisemitism can affect anyone, regardless of whether they are Jewish or not
2. Jewish people are part of football, but antisemitism puts them off taking part and takes the fun out of the game for them
3. Antisemitism is against the law and ground regulations, and should be taken as seriously as all other forms of discriminatory behaviour such as homophobia, sexism and disability discrimination
4. The FA, leagues and clubs have clear rules and sanctions for all forms of discrimination including antisemitic discrimination
5. Familiarise yourself with your club's Customer Charter and Equality Policy
6. Don't ignore antisemitic behaviour – like all forms of discrimination it must be challenged
7. Don't put yourself at risk: if you are made aware of antisemitic behaviour in football stadia, only challenge it with a colleague and never by yourself
8. When you challenge antisemitism, explain why it's unacceptable at the club and record details of the behaviour
9. If antisemitic behaviour persists, make sure the safety officer is aware, so they can escalate the response
10. Find out what else your club is doing to tackle antisemitism, including training opportunities

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Reporting Antisemitism

English football is proud to be a diverse and inclusive sport, with players, coaches, match officials, supporters and other participants coming from a range of backgrounds and communities around the world. Everyone has the right to feel safe and to enjoy taking part in the game.

Supporters on match days play a vital role in helping to tackle all forms of discrimination, including antisemitic behaviour, by reporting anything they witness or experience.

There are lots of ways to report antisemitism in football:

 At the game, tell a steward or ask to speak to a safety officer

 Alternatively, find out if your club also has a text service or phone number you can use to report antisemitism

Information about the incident should include, where possible, the stand, row, seat number and description of the offender(s).

 If the incident happens outside the stadium, you can also tell a police officer.



Reporting Antisemitism *continued*

Community Security Trust (CST) is a charity that protects British Jews from antisemitism and related threats. National Emergency Number (24-hour) **0800 032 3263**
www.cst.org.uk

Kick It Out is football's equality and inclusion organisation. You can report all forms of discrimination to them via the **free reporting app**, available on the App Store and Google Play, through the online reporting form at **www.kickitout.org**, emailing **info@kickitout.org**, by calling the freephone number – **0800 169 9414** or on Twitter via **@kickitoutreport**

The FA and County FAs investigate all allegations of discriminatory behaviour in professional and grassroots football **www.thefa.com**

True Vision is a police-funded website for reporting hate crimes including HBT discrimination. Report any hate-related crime via their website **www.report-it.org.uk**

Anyone who witnesses or experiences antisemitism should also try to avoid posting information about the incident on social media as this may compromise any investigation into it.



Other useful contacts

Board of Deputies of British Jews

The elected representative body of the British Jewish community. It provides information and collects data on, and for, the community.

020 7543 5400 www.bod.org.uk

@BoardofDeputies info@bod.org.uk

Holocaust Educational Trust

The Holocaust Educational Trust works with schools, colleges and communities across the UK to educate about the Holocaust and its contemporary relevance.

020 7222 6822 www.het.org.uk

@HolocaustUK info@het.org.uk

Jewish Leadership Council

The representative body of leading UK Jewish charities and organisations.

020 7242 9734 www.thejlc.org

@JLC_uk info@thejlc.org

Maccabi GB

Maccabi GB and its affiliates are Britain's leading Anglo-Jewish Sports, Health and Wellbeing Charity.

020 8457 2333 www.maccabigb.org

@maccabigb enquiries@maccabigb.org





SEE IT

HEAR IT

REPORT IT

*If you see or hear
antisemitism, report it
to Kick It Out, The FA
and True Vision:*



Kick It Out via their
free reporting app
www.kickitout.org



The FA and County FAs
www.thefa.com



True Vision
www.report-it.org.uk

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