# **Understanding the role of alcohol consumption in football cultures (Alcohol FC)**

# **Focus Group topic guide**

**Notes on how this topic guide will be used:**

*The topic guide is designed to be used flexibly; there is no prescribed question wording and interviewers are free to explore any unanticipated but relevant themes that arise during the discussion.*

*Interviewer prompts are denoted in italics. Prompts have been included to stimulate discussion if required. There is no expectation that all prompts are covered in every interview.*

*Section 2 requires the use of cue cards which describe each element of current regulations surrounding alcohol and football (e.g. It is illegal to enter a stadium whilst drunk).*

Introductions and warm up questions

1. **Attending football matches**

Can you talk me through your experience of a typical match day? When do you leave the house? Do you go anywhere before/after the match? How do you travel to the ground? What time do you like to get to the ground?

Do you drink when attending football matches? Can you describe this drinking (at what stage during the day do you drink, how much do you tend to drink)?

Who do you attend matches with (friends/family/supporters club)? Do they drink?

Is your drinking different for home/away games? If so, why?

Prompt: *Ask about mode of transport, who they go with, distance travelled.*

Is it difficult to not drink when you attend football matches?

* Prompt: *establish importance of alcohol to the match-day experience, social pressures? Is it difficult to avoid alcohol? How are fans who don’t drink viewed by other fans?*

Are you more likely to drink on some match days than others? (time of kick off, day of week, competition)

Do you think alcohol is important to the football watching experience? If so, why?

Why do you think football has such a long-standing relationship with alcohol?

Do you think alcohol is important for the football clubs?

* Prompt: *sponsorship; income; hospitality; atmosphere*

What are the positive aspects associated with alcohol consumption?

* Prompt: *social interactions; enjoyment;* *celebrations*

What are the negative aspects associated with alcohol consumption?

* Prompt: *violence; aggression; lower inhibitions*

How do you feel football supporters are viewed (by the public, by the media)?

* Prompt*: does media reporting tend to focus on certain groups of supporters?*

When violence occurs at football matches, what do you think contributes to this?

* Prompt: *alcohol, drugs, sectarianism*

Can any of you tell me about your experience of watching football in other countries? Was alcohol available? Did you drink?

* Prompt*: experience of alcohol, policing, regulations, price, and availability.*

1. **Attitudes and understanding of current regulations**

What is your understanding of the current regulations surrounding alcohol at football matches?

* Prompt: *go through each regulation using the cue cards and ask participants whether they feel the regulation is:*
  + *Fair*
  + *Effective*
  + *Necessary*
  + *Enforced*
  + *In need of change*

Why do you think these regulations are in place? What do you think led to these regulations being put in place?

What adverse consequences of current regulations can you think of?

Are there any areas regarding alcohol and football you feel are not covered by regulations and are in need of addressing?

Who do you think should have a role in tackling the issue of alcohol and football? (e.g. Government, football clubs, Football’s governing bodies (FA/SFA/UEFA/FIFA).

1. **Watching football at home**

What about watching football at home, do you usually drink alcohol when watching football on television?

If so, what are your main reasons for drinking when watching football at home?

* Prompt: *how much do they drink, how often, on your own/with others?*

Are you more likely to drink watching some matches than others? (time of kick off, day of week, competition)

* Prompts: *ask about availability, affordability, accessibility of alcohol at home*

1. **Watching football at the pub**

What about watching football in the pub, is this something you do regularly? Do you specifically go to the pub to watch the football?

Do you always tend to drink when you watch football in the pub?

Is your drinking any different when football is on compared to a visit to the pub when football isn’t being shown?

* Prompts: *ask about availability, affordability, accessibility of alcohol at the pub*

1. **Drinking during other sports/leisure pursuits**

What about going to other sports? Do any of you go to rugby, cricket, boxing, tennis etc.)?

Is the drinking at these events different from football? In what way?

What about watching other sports at home or in the pub?

What about other leisure activities (cinema, theatre, dining out) – how does drinking when attending or watching football compare?

* Prompt: *do they drink more or less, do they drink different types of alcohol, do they drink for different reasons?*

Do you think fans of other sports are viewed differently from football fans? If so, why do you think this is?

1. **The role of alcohol in society**

How important is alcohol in society today?

Do you think drinking habits have changed in any way over time?

Why do you think people drink alcohol?

When are you/others most likely to consume alcohol?

Do you ever reflect on your own alcohol consumption in terms of health?

* Prompt: *Ask if they ever think about health risks, units consumed, does drinking ever lead to any problems (family/work)?*

Do you think drinking habits in Scotland/England/UK are different to those in other countries?

Do you think drinking habits vary across different parts of the UK?

Do you drink differently during the football season compared to the summer when there is no football on?

* Prompt: *ask about general lifestyle differences outside of football season.*

Wrap up, any issues not covered?

**Thank all participants for taking part**

**Hand out incentives and ask participants to sign incentives receipt form.**