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Sport, Homelessness and Capability: Voices from the Street

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23 **ABSTRACT**

24 To what extent does soccer increase the capability of the homeless and those living on
25 the street? This study addresses this question by focusing on the ways in which the
26 Homeless World Cup and Street Soccer (Scotland) have impacted upon the lives of some
27 individuals. Primary source data obtained from a series of interviews are situated within
28 Sen's capability approach to social choice theory. The implications of the study
29 contribute to policy by supporting the idea that sport can contribute as a resource of hope
30 through the development of capability that impacts upon life chances and choices. It
31 adds to a growing number of applied studies of sport that have critically used the work
32 of Sen and it advances the way in which this body of work has been utilized in sport and
33 related areas.

34 **Key Words:** sport, homelessness, poverty, capability, life chances and choices

35 The Homeless World Cup Foundation (HWC) was co-founded in 2001 by Mel Young
36 and Harald Schmidt with the aim of using soccer² to alleviate homelessness. HWC is a Scottish
37 based non-profit organisation which acts as the umbrella body for a network of street soccer
38 partners. Established with backing from *the International Network of Street Papers*, it was
39 developed to promote social opportunities and access to support services for those experiencing
40 homelessness. It now works in 450 locations, harnesses and co-ordinates a network of partners
41 in 74 countries and in 2016 involved 2,821 volunteers and 80,000 players (HWC, 2017, p. 2).
42 The HWC tournament has been held annually in a different country each year. In 2016 it was
43 held in the City of Glasgow over 7 days, involving 58 teams, 47 nations, 482 players and 370
44 volunteers. 80,000 fans attended the 341 matches and generated an online audience and
45 engagement in excess of 30, 700, 000 (HWC, 2017, p. 2). The Glasgow tournament alone was

² The term soccer is used throughout when referring to football except where the term football is used in a direct quote or interview.

46 estimated to have created \$13 million in social capital. As a whole in 2016 HWC was estimated
47 to have created more than \$364 million in social capital (HWC, 2017, p. 3).

48 Street Soccer Scotland (SSS) is one of the HWC partner organisations. Founded in
49 2009, it too is a non-profit social enterprise which uses soccer to facilitate positive change in
50 the lives of socially disadvantaged adults and young people in Scotland. It provides drop in
51 and national soccer programmes and access to support services throughout Scotland. Both
52 HWC and SSS are able to access partnerships connected to housing, education, health that not
53 only help to sustain pathways out of homelessness but enable individuals to make social
54 choices, develop human capability and provide opportunities. It is for such reasons writes
55 Holmwood (2013, p. 1171) that sociologists and others advocating for social justice and
56 fighting social inequality should pay more attention to the capability approach (CA)³. At the
57 core of this approach is a theory of social choice that adds weight to the significance of an
58 individual's capability of achieving the kind of life they have reason to value (Sen, 2017; 2009;
59 1999).

60 In any one year about 100,000 people go through HWC programmes. The HWC
61 describes itself as a pioneering social movement that uses soccer to inspire homeless people to
62 change their own lives. Its global reach and impact is wide, as one of the co-founders points
63 out:

64 ...We reckon we've touched the lives of over a million people across the world since we
65 started. We have 100,000 on the different programmes around the world right now. We're
66 working with some of the most marginalised people in the world, with the most difficult
67 issues and creating change through football... (interview 5 November 2014: HWC co-
68 founder)

³ This study while acknowledging a wide range of researchers have engaged with the capability approach is primarily informed by the work of Sen and in particular his recent re assessment of his contribution and critics.

69 When asked about rates of poverty in the world:

70 ...My view is that poverty is increasing. I mean it's always very difficult to measure
71 because there's different measures around. And in terms of the number of homeless
72 people again, United Nations say there's a billion people that are homeless, which is an
73 astonishing number. I mean I use a figure of 100 million on the street, which is still an
74 astonishing figure. The world is a rich place. It can deal with the problem if it wants to...

75 (interview 5 November 2014: HWC co-founder)

76 Researchers across disciplines have sought to explain the HWC. These studies include
77 (i) using the HWC as a case study to explain the role of social entrepreneurship, marketing and
78 partnership (Foster, Hornblower and O'Reilly 2010); (ii) qualitative studies of the Australian
79 Homeless World Cup Team evidencing that participation in sport can provide beneficial
80 outcomes for participants and through a process of (re)engagement enable the development of
81 social capital (Sherry, 2010). A further study of Australian homeless individuals with mental
82 illness and / or substance abuse issues suggested that sport initially provided social bonding
83 within a limited social network and yet over time other types of social capital (bridging and
84 linking) were exhibited by the participants that enabled access to ancillary services provided
85 through the HWC programmes (Sherry and O'May, 2013); (iii) a series of critical sociological
86 evaluations of the HWC highlighted it's role in combatting social exclusion (Magee, 2011;
87 Magee and Jeanes, 2013); (iv) a collection of essays and social commentaries crafted by local
88 writers and adult learners inspired by the 2016 HWC in Glasgow (Welsh and Strachan, 2017);
89 while (v) media studies researchers have examined how the HWC foundation uses soccer and
90 digital media platforms to bring the problems and perceptions of homelessness into play,
91 concluding that it offers an innovative, multi-platform model to reimagine homelessness
92 (Crawford and McGowan, 2017).

93 At the same time a small group of researchers have sought to introduce a CA approach

94 to the analysis of sport for development (Darnell and Dao, 2017; Jarvie and Sikes, 2012; Rossi,
95 2015; Rossi and Jeanes, 2016; 2017; Suzuki, 2017; Svensson and Levine, 2017; Sikes and
96 Jarvie, 2014). This body of work consists of a number of themes including: the development
97 of running capabilities as a means of opening up social choices for Kenyan women runners
98 (Jarvie and Sikes, 2012; Sikes and Jarvie, 2014); the idea that a person's capabilities can be
99 improved through micro, meso and macro level social processes involving sport (Suzuki,
100 2017); advocating for the integration of sport for development and peace (SDP) and arguing
101 that international development studies might be better served by critically deploying
102 Nussbaum's articulation of CA (Darnell and Dao, 2017); suggesting that SDP might be
103 provided with some normative direction if the area utilized a CA approach to frame the practice
104 of SDP (Svensson and Levine, (2017) and finally Rossi (2015) has illustrated CA's utility value
105 in analyzing indigenous sports programmes in Australia. Only a few of these contributions
106 have reflected upon Sen's (2017) more recent intervention. However, they do take up
107 Holmwood's (2013, p.1171) invitation for sociologists not to let Sen's account of the human
108 individual be a reason for ignoring the work of the writer. In a telling comment Holmwood
109 (2013, p. 1171) asserts that a concern for inequality is after all at the heart of both sociology
110 and the work of Sen.

111 Existing studies of the HWC span sociological, cultural, accountancy and social
112 entrepreneurial explanations. Such studies have generally been limited to two areas, the
113 development of social capital and the critique of social inclusion. Questions remain about the
114 development of capability and the social choices that are both enabled and challenged by HWC
115 and street soccer provision and practice. Add to this the relative reluctance of sociologists and
116 critical thinkers of sport to embrace the work of Sen and its practical application to the framing
117 of a study about homelessness and soccer and you have a sound rationale for a study of soccer,
118 homelessness and capability that draws upon voices from the street. This study addresses these

119 themes. It does so in a substantive and analytical way by drawing upon interviews with HWC
120 participants SSS participants.

121 **Voices From The Street**

122 Both HWC and SSS use soccer to counter the isolation of homelessness and its detrimental
123 effect on people's ability to develop life chances and human capability. In July 2016 Mel
124 Young, a co-founder of the HWC, was standing with former player, coach and CEO of SSS:
125 David Duke, at the start of the 14th HWC in Glasgow. David had achieved so much since being
126 homeless in Glasgow but as he watched the current Scotland players, men and women, he
127 understood more than most what it meant to every single one of them as they strived to live
128 valuable lives (Young and Barr, 2017, p. 238). They are, in the words of one player the 'voice
129 of the voiceless' (interview: 12 July 2016: HWC Glasgow, player B). David Duke had been
130 part of the 2011 Scotland HWC coaching team in Paris. The HWC Press Pack (2011, p. 2) for
131 this event reported that '70% of the players who participate in HWC annual tournament
132 changed for the better'. Duke offered the following insights on being homeless, volunteering
133 and education:

134 *On early involvement with HWC and being homeless:*

135 ...As a player. I was living in a young person's homeless project, after I'd had my life
136 turned upside down following the death of my father. I was drinking loads.Back
137 in 2004 I was living in a young person's homeless project and I'd seen an advert for the
138 HWC and I dragged myself out of bed and went along to the trials. I'd cut myself off
139 from a lot of people and the boredom of having nothing to do led to drinking more than
140 you should of, your poor diet, poor sleeping times and stuff. Football gave me a way
141 out... (interview 28 August 2011: HWC D)

142 *On comparative realization and volunteering*

143 ...So I went to the tournament and it was a great experience. We got to the semi's and
144 then meeting all the different people from all over the world kind of opened my eyes to,
145 you know something, my life isn't really that bad...Fortunately, I'd registered to be a
146 volunteer in Active Glasgow and I managed to get onto their programme where I could
147 go and volunteer with a local boys club while I did my coaching badges. I did that and
148 then an opportunity came up with the Big Issue, which ran the HWC team at the time, to
149 become an assistant coach as a voluntary position. So I went for that and I got it and that
150 got me back involved in the HWC... (interview 28 August 2011: HWC D)

151 *On education and qualifications*

152 ...While I was doing that, em, I'd got my house by then, I'd managed to get myself a
153 flat, I was coaching 3 nights a week with a boys club, learning and then I worked under
154 Ally Dawson who's the HWC men's team managerso I worked under him and
155 volunteered a lot of time. Then I went to college because I wanted to get involved in sport
156 but also because, I'd never been career minded, I'd never done my standard grades or
157 anything, em, so I went away to college and done a community work qualification...So
158 I done my coaching badges out with that and then I gained my HNC and that allowed me
159 to get a job, a couple of part times jobs working as a youth worker before I got a full time
160 job with the Big Issue... (interview 28 August 2011: HWC D)

161 This may only be one journey travelled by one individual but it illustrates the
162 capabilities and freedoms that can grow from being involved with street-soccer. At the core of
163 Sen's (2017, 2009, 1999) argument is a proposition about the nature of the individual as
164 embodying capabilities that may or may not be realized but also that inequalities of power
165 matter as much as inequalities of income. To take care of poverty, asserted Sen (2009, p. 254)
166 required other institutions like the state to support an individual's ill-health, illiteracy and
167 educational achievement and/or opportunity. There is more to tackling homelessness than

168 playing soccer but soccer in the form of the HWC and SSS provided at least two things to
169 David Duke: (i) a pathway into other services that enabled a route out of homelessness and, (ii)
170 the development of individual capabilities that altered life chances through the process of being
171 involved in HWC and or SSS. Thus we suggest that the development of capabilities that players
172 and former homeless people attributed to their involvement in HWC and SSS, altered the social
173 choices available to them which in turn altered their life chances.

174 The voices presented here focus upon a set of capabilities and barriers which emerged
175 from the interviews with organization founders, players and former players held over a eight-
176 year period between 2011 to 2017. These voices should not be seen as simply a feature of
177 people's personal involvement within HWC or SSS but in Sen's terms (2017, p. 357)
178 development as freedom to choose between different ways of living that people had reason to
179 value. The homeless voices presented here talk about HWC and SSS facilitating mental health,
180 social connections and social networks, leadership, perspective and gratefulness and
181 educational achievement. However, there are barriers such as fear of involvement, fear of
182 getting on a bus and fear of soccer do exist. Lessons have to be learned if further opportunities
183 are to be enabled and it should not be assumed that soccer for those on the street is an open
184 door.

185 *Players voices*

186 Both players and former players talked of how involvement in HWC and SSS helped
187 them cope with both mental and physical health challenges presented by everyday life on and
188 off the street.

189 ...It helped me mentally because I was starting to get depressed, but the football and goal
190 of HWC helped me feel more positive... (interview 26 August 2011: HWC player A)

191 ...I was angry before...I had a temper on me, but since being in the street soccer
192 programme I can control it better... (interview 12 March 2014: SSS player B)

193 The players talked of self-improvement from working, feeling more in control and staying
194 healthy:

195 ...Because of street soccer, we have some work now too, that makes me feel better... (interview
196 10 March 2014: SSS player A)

197 ...I want to feel like I have control in an aspect of my life again... At the moment soccer
198 gives me this... (interview 16 April 2014: SSS, player F)

199 ...Street Soccer Scotland believed in me until I could believe in myself... (interview 10
200 June 2017: SSS, player F)

201 Others talked of the emergence of leadership qualities, potential and the building of confidence.

202 ...I've started my own wee team on a Thursday night, so that's kind of given me
203 leadership skills and that..... I'm arranging the two teams from here as that's given me
204 skills that I would have never been able to do. Like: sort two teams out, collect the money
205 in, go and register the teams. You know what I mean I would never have been able to do
206 that before... (interview 10 March 2014: SSS player A)

207 Other former players talked of becoming role models, ambassadors and leaders:

208 ...Right now I am the role model for them, because I went to Melbourne. Now I am the
209 coach. I have changed and I say to them that they can change too... (interview 26 August
210 2011: HWC player A)

211 ...my kind of role is kind of welfare, just looking out for the other players and making
212 sure they are all right. So it's just making sure that the lassies are all right and if they get
213 to meetings, that kind of thing... (interview 28 August 2011: HWC player E)

214 One of the capabilities referred to was that of confidence.

215 ...You gain a bit more confidence about yourself as well... (interview 10 March 2014:
216 SSS player A)

217 ...I can do things now that I just couldnae do before... (interview 12 March 2014: SSS
218 player B)

219 ...football taught me that the unbelievable was achievable ...I'm building a life for myself
220 now... (interview 26 June, 2017: SSS, player K)

221 *Pathways and a means to an end*

222 In Sen's (1999, p. xii) terms it would be important to note that homeless people's access to
223 soccer constitutes an important development end in and of itself. Homeless is but one aspect
224 of poverty which Sen (1999, p. xii) defined as the systematic neglect, or any element that leaves
225 people with little choice. While a person's freedom was conceptualized as a set of life options
226 from which a person is able to choose. The cycle(s) of involvement with HWC and SSS helped
227 to provide personal pathways towards re-integration into society and also developed capability
228 sets that enabled individual and collective choices to be made.

229 A career pathway into professional soccer may have been dreamt by many but only
230 happened for the few including one with the Portugal and former Manchester United player.
231 Bebe played for HWC local Portuguese partner *Cais* in the European Street Football Festival,
232 a year later signed for Manchester United Football Club and was selected for the Portuguese
233 under 21 team. Talking to a national newspaper Bebe said (Harvey, 2016: p. 1):

234 ...I had eight years in an orphanage. There, I did not like football but my friends always
235 wanted to play and I had no choice but to join in. At first I thought it was a joke when I
236 was told of United's interest, but then I saw it was true and understood that it was a
237 unique opportunity...

238 The impact of such stories have lead other homeless people to seek help through HWC:
239 ...I heard about Bebe the guy from Portugal who was here as a player and now he's at
240 Manchester United, that's what I heard so maybe they can help me... (interview 26
241 August 2011: HWC, player A).

242 While stories like Bebe's provide high profile support for the the work of HWC and SSS, the
243 pathways and choices made and offered to other players and former players were somewhat
244 different. Yet involvement with street-soccer in all of the cases highlighted here support the
245 functioning of HWC and/ or SSS as being valuable pathways that altered life chances, provided
246 resources of hope and acted as a means to an end.

247 ...I had 2 daughters at a very early age and I had a hectic lifestyle with drugs and alcohol
248 and stuff like that. My goals that I'd had when I was younger just died away you know
249 what I mean. It was my own fault but I was getting trapped in that life.... I don't have
250 that lifestyle anymore, I certainly don't drink and I don't take drugs anymore. After that
251 I changed my attitude and my behaviour and stuff and obviously started to change my
252 life and SSS was there to help me achieve my goals and here I am after a year and a half
253 still going strong...I have confidence in SSS who are doing their very best to give support
254 to me... (interview 10 March 2014: SSS player A)

255 ...I played with Dundee United, Airdrie, Clyde, East Stirling and I played Junior as well.
256 I broke my leg 3 times, so...things changed, I had to do part time jobs and part time
257 football, just to try and make a living...I became homeless. I split up with my son's mum
258 and... she stayed in the house with the kid and I moved out. Then I became redundant in
259 March...Then in August I became homeless and I was staying in a homeless hostel...I
260 was in there for 11 and a half months and I came to HWC, through the football and I got
261 a house. So there's a house sitting back in Glasgow for me when I get back... (interview
262 28 August 2011: HWC player E)

263 ...To me it (HWC) it was a symbol of hope, determination, strength and courage. It was
264 the first time in my life I was proud to say I was an addict in recovery... (interview, 10
265 June 2017: HWC, player D)

266 ...I live a life I'm proud of today and Street Soccer Scotland gave me that. They loved
267 me before I loved myself... (interview, 16 June, 2017: SSS, player j)

268 *Valuable lives*

269 A valuable life, writes Sen (1999, p. 46), is one in which each individual has the opportunity
270 to be and do what they value. The expansion of a valuable life requires the expansion of
271 capabilities, where capability is the ability, freedom or opportunity to achieve specific
272 functioning's such as being well nourished, sheltered (beings) or travelling or caring for a child
273 (doings) (Sen, 1999: p. 47).

274 Those involved with street soccer identified a valuable life in both social and material
275 terms and HWC and SSS voices talked specifically about social connections, self-improvement
276 and work. Soccer was part of what to many of the interviewees constituted a valuable life. It
277 was both an end in itself but also a means to an end as it led to social benefits, social services,
278 social networks, housing, family and/or friends. As HWC player E highlighted, a valuable life
279 was one in which he could play an active part in his son's life. Having split from the family,
280 he wanted to be able to have his son to stay with him. That was the motivation to escape the
281 hostel and the player highlighted the role that HWC and SSS played in helping him achieve
282 this:

283 ...It helped me mentally because I was starting to get depressed because I couldn't get
284 my boy to stay over with me, I couldnae have him in the hostel, so I missed having him
285 overnight and all that. I was used to spending every day with him... (interview 28 August
286 2011: HWC player E)

287 When the same person was interviewed again in 2014, this time as a coach with SSS,
288 he had turned his life around. He was earning a steady income through his role with SSS and
289 had moved into a permanent home. When asked about what he valued in life he answered:

290 ...It's brilliant now' cos I get my wee man over at weekends and he can stay with me
291 now, so he's back in my life. He *is* my life. I work hard so we can go out together and go
292 and do things like go to a (football) match or I can go and buy him clothes or a toy and
293 stuff... (interview 16 April 2014: SSS player F)

294 The narratives provided by players and former players provide evidence that this
295 expansion of capabilities changed lives, helped to overcome what once seemed to be
296 impossible and contributed to a life more valued. Better life chances evolved and changed as
297 new perspectives and opportunities opened up. However, it barriers to SSS do remain.

298 *Friendships, barriers and fear of soccer*

299 Talking about CA women and human development Nussbaum (2000, p. 1) stated that 'women
300 in much of the world lack support for fundamental functions of a human life'...and goes on to
301 argue that 'women have fewer opportunities than men to live free from fear and to enjoy
302 rewarding types of lives'. (2000, p. 1). At this point it is important to note that women's access
303 to HWC and SSS constitutes an important development end in itself. However, practices that
304 result in the systematic denial of rights and access relative to men need to be renegotiated, not
305 only in HWC and SSS but also in politics, economics and other social opportunities. Theory
306 matters when researching gender and homelessness but so too does critical evidence that
307 exposes gaps in provision or barriers to inclusion.

308 The women involved in HWC and SSS talked of the expansion of capabilities and life
309 chances through accessing opportunities to education, employment, raising awareness, making
310 friends, improved health and taking on leadership roles. Listen to the following women's
311 voices:

312 ...so I'll just be happy when I can make as many friends as possible... (interview, 26
313 August 2011: HWC player A)

314 ...We are very happy because of all the new friends we have made... (interview 27
315 August 2011: HWC player C)

316 ...we have received training from our international partners, through Debs (HWC), she's
317 the one that helped us to say now, this is the focus, this is the path we need to take now,
318 so now this time around we are saying to ourselves that our main focus is on the football,
319 but we want to take this project to different avenues. One is the vocational work, so one
320 person can create income generating activities so that the programme is self
321 sustaining...we are bringing women, through this group of women we feel we can reach
322 more...women... (interview 26 August 2011: HWC player A)

323 There are at least two social processes through which female participants contribute to
324 re-configuring how women's roles and opportunities are perceived. The first is the recognition
325 and awareness that a pathway is offered through involvement with soccer for women and girls
326 who have been homeless. A pathway that could alter life chances. The second is the
327 commitment to action, for example, to create self-sustaining programmes that can reach out to
328 other women. The latter finding is similar to the previously cited research on Kenyan women
329 runners (Jarvie and Sikes, 2012; Sikes and Jarvie, 2014) which saw the opportunities provided
330 through running to Kenyan women as a means to an end not just for individual women runners
331 but broader communities of Kenyan women who benefited from the re-distribution of wealth
332 into communities with the women, not the men, being the principle agents of change.

333 Despite the considerable opportunities provided by HWC and SSS it would be
334 misleading to suggest that there are no barriers to street-soccer. Some of the women talked
335 about fear of the unknown, fear of football, fear of strangers and fear of places.

336 *On perceptions and taking the first step*

337 ...Very often it takes a long time for women just to visualize. She will go- I would like
338 to play some games and then you offer and she backs off... (interview 12 June 2017:
339 SSS, player H)

340 ...and going of my own experiences – you're like ...yea that sounds cool and I want to
341 do it. But I don't know what to expect. I don't know what I am going into, too many
342 fears... (interview 12 June, 2017: SSS, player H)

343 ...it's not knowing what to expect and it's the little things as well though – the venue,
344 where it's at, can people see me... (interview 7 June 2017: SSS, Director B)

345 *On fear of soccer*

346 ...I think that's a difficult thing as I come from a generation where football just was not
347 for the likes of me' (interview 3 July 2017: SSS, Player L)

348 ...There are limited females attending because in my opinion, they think it is Street
349 Soccer and they can't play football and they think it's about guys running about with
350 their ego's and things like that... (interview 5 June 2017: SSS Director A)

351 *On structural barriers – transport*

352 ...With temporary accommodation, it is usually around the city centre so it's not an issue
353 to get to places. But very often when people get Council housing they are outside, so
354 coming in to the city centre without having a bus pass or being on very limited benefits,
355 that's a barrier itself' (interview 5 June, 2017: SSS Director A)

356 ...I challenged myself by one – getting on a bus to come here to the other side of town...
357 (interview 21 June 2017: SSS player J)

358 Perhaps it is impossible to fully understand the social impact that soccer can have but the
359 voices from the street suggest it can be a resource of hope or in Sen's terms it could be
360 suggested that HWC and SSS interventions contribute to the development of capability and
361 choice.

362 **Soccer Enabling Capability and Social Choices.**

363 Few if any have argued that soccer can be part of a social contract or a resource of hope for
364 the homeless. Yet it is the possibilities of such an idea that is presented in Sen's discussions
365 of CA in *Collective Choice and Social Welfare* (Sen, 2017). At the heart of this normative
366 proposition, first presented in 1970 and defended and elaborated upon in 2017, is the
367 suggestion that for societies to support what most people consider is important, *to live a life*
368 *well*, it is not enough to address just people's needs and rights but also their capability. To
369 facilitate people's right to a home may not be enough unless this is also supported with, for
370 example, the capacity to read, to think, to be healthy, to be employed and the other resources
371 that help to live valued lives. These are all necessary if the social realization from the
372 combination of choices made individually and collectively a person's quality of life, is to
373 flourish (Sen, 2017: p. 357). A person's capability is thus represented as a result of the
374 combination of functioning's that a person can choose. Thus the capability set stands for the
375 actual freedom of choice a person has over the alternative lives that they can lead (Sen,
376 2017: p. 357).

377 If social participation is central to the realization of capabilities then the spheres of
378 public action through which capabilities can be enabled extends, well beyond the areas
379 identified by Sen who primarily confined attention to those suffering from hunger, disease and
380 illiteracy. Deprivations that might prevent the realization of human potential might certainly
381 include not having access to shelter or homes or sport or safe public spaces. The notion of an
382 expanded list of valued or valuable capabilities can be gleaned from reading the work of not
383 just Sen (2017) but also Nussbaum (2011), Crocker (2008) and Robeyns (2017). This shifts the
384 focus beyond just the individual resources required to foster individual welfare into wider
385 spheres of public action such as those provided through HWC and SSS. Thus it is suggested
386 that while human action depends upon social integration for its efficacy, the personal

387 empowerment that comes from participating in street-soccer also requires collective choice and
388 collective action if capabilities are to be fully realized and valuable lives are to be lived.

389 Two further points need to be made. Firstly, central to the argument and perhaps the
390 central argument about development and choice within both the original Sen (1999) and the
391 revised Sen (2017) is that freedom is both the ends and the means of development. The freedom
392 to set, go after and realize goals enables development because it recognizes what people both
393 valued in terms of doing and being. HWC and SSS provided the means of fostering and
394 enabling a particular capability or a set of capabilities to achieve more valuable lives for those
395 than those that had been experienced by homeless people prior to any involvement with HWC
396 and or SSS.

397 Secondly if we are to return to Holmwood's (2013) challenge and invitation to
398 sociologists not to be deterred by Sen's emphasis on the realization of individual capabilities,
399 it should be evident that Sen's arguments have significant consequences for how we think about
400 choice, freedom, social welfare inequality and development. Moreover, perhaps more
401 important is the promise and possibility that a CA approach offers in terms of both individual
402 and collective forms of agency. As Sen (2017, p. 422) indicates in a discussion of human rights,
403 voluntary action, pressure group agitation and collective protest are all at times required to
404 achieve human rights. Thus it might be suggested that as forms of public action through soccer
405 HWC and SSS might be viewed as valuable social tools in the fight against homelessness. As
406 the voices provided in this study suggests soccer enables capability and social choice. Sen's
407 approach acknowledges the multiplicity of situations facing individuals in the course of daily
408 life as well as the varied social circumstances within which communities, for example,
409 homeless communities, determine collective action.

410 **Concluding Remarks**

411 Any contemporary understanding of the interaction between soccer and homelessness

412 must involve actively listening to and engaging with homeless communities, places and voices.
413 The research in this study has been mainly based upon qualitative interviews and relevant
414 documentary evidence collected between 2011 and 2017. The evidence shows that changing
415 environments, broadening horizons and creating opportunities can be enabled through
416 participation with HWC and SSS. Soccer has helped to develop capability and that people's
417 ability to choose the lives they wish to live can be curtailed by factors other than economic
418 circumstances. Policy interventions around homelessness that involve sport, in this case soccer,
419 should continue to evaluate how far such interventions have influenced life chances. It has been
420 suggested here that access to HWC and SSS has helped to open up a range of choices and
421 access to services, support networks, and other resources that have helped to change the lives
422 of individuals. It has also extended the number of studies that have risen to the challenge of
423 applying a CA approach to sport.

424 It has also prioritized the voices of some homeless people involved with soccer as a basis of
425 substantiating a contribution to a CA informed approach to the work of HWC and SSS while
426 acknowledging that more work has to be done to remove certain barriers to street soccer.
427 However, the issues raised in this study make a contribution to both of these projects and it is
428 hoped that this may encourage further research around sport and poverty. It is also hoped that
429 researchers more broadly within sport, physical education and physical activity who are
430 interested in social choice, collective welfare and altering life chances might value the
431 possibilities that a CA informed problematic can bring.

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503 ***List of Interviewees***

- 504 Interview 26 August 2011, HWC player A
- 505 Interview 27 August 2011, HWC player C
- 506 Interview 28 August 2011, HWC D
- 507 Interview 28 August 2011, HWC player E
- 508 Interview 10 March 2014, SSS player A
- 509 Interview 12 March 2014, SSS player B

- 510 Interview 16 April 2014, SSS player F
- 511 Interview 5 November 2014, HWC Co-founder
- 512 Interview 12 July 2016, HWC player B
- 513 Interview 5 June 2017, SSS Director A
- 514 Interview 7 June 2017, SSS Director B
- 515 Interview 10 June 2017, SSS, player C
- 516 Interview 10 June 2017, HWC, player D
- 517 Interview 10 June 2017, SSS, player F
- 518 Interview 12 June 2017, SSS player H
- 519 Interview 16 June 2017, SSS player I
- 520 Interview 21 June 2017, SSS player J
- 521 Interview 26 June, 2017, SSS player K
- 522 Interview 3 July 2017, SSS player L

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