

Liverpool FC Supporters' Committee

"We are pro-Liverpool and anti-nobody" (Bill Shankly 1971)



ANNUAL REPORT 2014



Liverpool FC Supporters' Committee

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Honorary President's Foreword



This was the second year for me in the role of Honorary President of the Liverpool FC Supporters' Committee and I was very lucky to have the excellent support of Bob Humphries (Chair) and Jeanette Dodd (Vice-Chair). I would like to take this opportunity to thank them both for their invaluable work on the Committee and their tireless commitment to Committee matters.

The new committee structure this year has allowed the Committee to be much better focused and more effective in representing you, the supporters. I believe that we have made many positive steps in the right direction this year, but there is always more to be done. We are committed to doing our very best on your behalf and we really look forward to more interaction with you so that we really are representative of your views. The Committee is your voice and only effective if you use it.

We as a Committee are all looking forward to making even further progress this season.

With best wishes,

Karen Gill
Honorary President
Liverpool FC Supporters' Committee

Chair's Report



Welcome to the 2014 Annual Report which we hope will give you a good overview of the Liverpool FC Supporters' Committee's work on behalf of all supporters.

The Supporters' Committee has made good progress during the past 12 months with our most productive year, certainly in terms of some of the improvements in the area of ticketing. It was good to see the Club recognise the value of our future support with the introduction of some initiatives for both junior and 'young person' supporters whilst away fans will also see some improvements this year. Our young supporters are the lifeblood of LFC and it is right that they, in turn, are supported by the Club. The support last season was amazing and some recognition of the hard work put in by fans and fan groups, such as the 'Spion Kop 1906' should not go unmentioned.



The Supporters' Committee fan forums continue to prove popular, with fans having the opportunity to engage with Committee Members on a face-to-face basis and these will continue throughout the 2014-15 season.

Meanwhile the Stadium redevelopment edges closer and the increased capacity should provide some welcome opportunities for more supporters to gain access to tickets. Discussions will be ongoing with the Club to ensure all categories of supporters are catered for and tickets priced accordingly.

Finally I would like to thank Karen Gill, our Honorary President and Jeanette Dodd (Vice Chair) for all their hard work and dedication during the past year, all supporters of LFC, whilst also to outgoing representatives Richie Pedder, Abu Nasir, Paul Amann and Laurie Whitehead for their tremendous contributions.

Best wishes
Bob Humphries
Chair, LFC Supporters' Committee

About the Liverpool FC Supporters' Committee

Liverpool Football Club Supporters Committee is an initiative of Liverpool Football Club. The Supporters' Committee acts as a consultation group that allows fans to help shape the club's future through regular and constructive dialogue with senior LFC officials.

The Liverpool FC Supporters' Committee (LFCSC) consists of 12 voluntary Members plus an Honorary President. The Committee represents the various stakeholder groups from the LFC supporter base including:

1. Families & young people;
2. Merseyside residents;
3. Official supporters clubs;
4. International West;
5. International East;
6. Disabled supporters;
7. Non-season ticket holders and members;
8. Away fans;
9. Female fans;
10. LGBT fans;
11. BAME supporters; and
12. Season ticket holders & hospitality fans

Members of the Committee share the supporters' opinions and views with LFC to help the club better understand the issues that most affect and concern its supporters.

Recruitment and Selection

Four of the positions on the LFC Supporters' Committee were up for election for this coming season. They were Non Season Ticket Holders and Members, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME), Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) and finally Official Supporters' Clubs. All supporters were given an opportunity to apply for one of these positions via the LFC official website. A three member panel read through these applications which resulted in a shortlist for each constituency. Supporters were then given the opportunity to vote for their preferred candidate. The process was overseen by the Football Supporters Federation (FSF) as an independent body.

Sub Committees

The LFC SC has continued to have four sub committees as follows;

- Communication
- Equality
- Ticketing
- International

Key achievements for 2013/14

1. Communication

LFC SC Web page

The LFC Supporters' Committee continued to add news items to our dedicated webpage on the official LFC website. This page has been updated regularly during the last twelve months to better reflect the Committee's work and includes notes from the quarterly fan forums. The page can be found under the "FANS" tab on the official LFC website and the direct link to our home page is:

<http://www.liverpoolfc.com/fans/supporters-committee/home>

Once there you will find tabs which give further information regarding (i) the concept of the LFC SC; (ii) our contact details; (iii) news items; and, (iv) previous minutes of official meetings held with the club.

Fan Forums/Q&A Sessions

After the success of our Q&A session with bloggers last year we decided to open these events up to all fans. These 'fan forums' take place prior to our quarterly meetings with the LFC Board and give fans the chance to meet the committee in person and ask questions. All questions raised are put to the LFC Board that weekend. The meetings are going well, and the Committee are pleased with the level of questions put forward. These events help to raise the profile of the Committee and we have now made them a regular event to coincide with our official club meetings.



Fan forum on "Pricing Structures", held at The Sandon, February 2014

It was at one of these fan forums that the subject of recognition for the Hillsborough Justice Campaign (HJC) on the official website was raised. We asked the club to address this and are glad to report that this has now been actioned.

LFC SC Media Appearances

During this season the committee has used the media to raise our profile and encourage more participation from supporters. In addition to the initiatives mentioned above, and meeting with fan groups/individual fans when requested, we have:

- appeared on #LFCWORLD on the LFCTV channel
- contributed on Radio Merseyside Total Football show
- contributed on The Anfield Wrap radio show on City Talk 105.9
- been interviewed for the Guardian newspaper
- appeared on the BBC Sport website and took part in a BBC Five Live debate

Further to this we also became members of the Football Supporters Federation (FSF) and Supporters' Committee representatives attended recent meetings.



LFC SC Social Media activity

During the last twelve months the Committee has been more active on social media sites Facebook and Twitter. This has allowed us to be more accessible to our huge fan base. We can provide updates on club and committee news whilst also give fans the opportunity to ask short questions, raise queries and provide feedback.



Our Facebook account can be found at: <https://www.facebook.com/LiverpoolFCSC>



Our twitter address is: **@LFCSupCom**

2. Equality

The LFC Supporters' Committee is committed to promoting equality and diversity and works alongside the club to champion inclusion and raise awareness. Equality representatives have taken part in events which celebrate equality and diversity throughout the calendar year. Further details of the 'equality calendar' events to mark disability; LGBT; women; race; and, older people initiatives will appear on the website.

A welcome addition to the equality sub-committee was Karen Gill our Honorary President, who joins the female, families & young people, disabled, BAME and LGBT representatives. In addition to offering general guidance on equality matters that relate to the LFC Supporters' Committee, Karen will also advise on issues specifically faced by older LFC fans.

Equality representatives received hundreds of emails and contacts last season on a vast variety of issues, including:

- Concerns regarding access to services and facilities
- Racism, homophobia, sexism and club responses on various related incidents
- Acknowledgements of the LFC SC activity in these areas
- Stadium expansion for access issues
- Provision of prayer facility and alternative food choice.
- Specific requests for personal, charitable and community donations

The Disabled Supporters' representative, Jeanette Dodd provided a tribute to lifelong LFC fan, Adam Walker, who passed away in September 2013. The tribute appeared on the LFC website and was published a match day programme, a copy of which was signed by the manager and the team and presented to Adam's family. A fund-raising auction, which was set up in Adam's name, was publicised via social media and the LFC website.



LFC Supporter Adam Walker, 1982-2013

Jeanette also assisted an ex-serviceman in getting his painting of Steven Gerrard signed. Matthew Rhodes lost his sight and is part-paralysed but was encouraged by the national charity Blind Veterans UK to take up painting. Matthew found he had an unlikely talent and painted a portrait of Steven Gerrard. Jeanette organised the signing of the painting by LFC's No.8, who said, "I was really impressed with the painting and I think that Matthew did capture a good likeness of me. His talent and technique is illustrated in this piece, which I was more than happy to sign." The painting will be placed at auction in aid of the Blind Veterans UK charity in early 2015, when it is hoped it will generate some much-needed funds.



Matthew painting at the BVUK centre



Matthew's painting of Steven Gerrard

Committee members made a response of solidarity on International Women's Day following the attack on Malmö fan, Showan Shattack, who is well known for his work with Malmö as an anti-racism and anti-homophobia campaigner.

In celebration of LGBT History Month and the Level Playing Field Campaign weeks of action, LFC hosted a friendship match in March. Liverpool's Ability Counts team took on Mersey Marauders FC at the Kirkby Academy to celebrate the club's ongoing commitment to equality and inclusion. LFC's Ability Counts team encourages all disabled footballers to join, train and play in competitive matches, whilst Marauders FC are Liverpool's only football team for gay men. The match was attended by the LGBT representative, Paul Amann and disability representative, Jeanette Dodd.

LFC and the Supporters' Committee celebrated International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT) at a special ceremony at Anfield on 17 May 2014. The Lord Mayor of Liverpool, Gary Millar and Paul Amann, Liverpool FC Supporters' Committee LGBT representative both made short addresses to the guests about the importance of IDAHOBIT, which commemorates the day the World Health Organisation removed homosexuality from its list of mental diseases. Over 80 countries in the world still criminalize same sex relationships while in many countries lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and those who identify as transgender are often attacked simply for their sexuality or gender identity.



IDAHOBIT day with Equality reps, Steve Rotherham MP and Lord Mayor, Gary Millar

3. Ticketing

Ticketing Subcommittee activity and areas where we are making progress are outlined below.

- ✓ Recognition of Child season tickets set at £200 for those who have season tickets in the child's name in all parts of the Stadium – to be implemented for season 2014-15
- ✓ Junior/child prices – frozen for season 2014-15



Child season tickets set at £200 in all parts of the Stadium for 2014-15

- ✓ Introduction of an unlimited number of 'Young Persons' tickets (age 17-21) for all Cup games at Anfield (including Champions League) at 50% of full adult ticket price
- ✓ Club have agreed to seek out agreements with other Premier league clubs for 'reciprocal deals' at £10 discount off the away regular price of tickets (although this will come out of the 'away' pot as per the Premier League initiative)
- ✓ Disabled fans' ticket pricing – frozen for season 2014-15
- ✓ Introduction of a range of benefits for LFC away supporters following discussions last year (as a trial involving the removal of telephone sales), including:
 - Increase from four to up to ten tickets purchased at a time (must be family and friends linked);
 - More phasing of loyalty credits to be recognised e.g. 17, 16, 15 etc., instead of jumping from 17 straight to 15 then 12;
 - The offer of a varied selection of seats; Faster delivery of tickets for supporters choosing to receive by post
 - Option of collecting tickets at the ticket office, post to person making the booking or to an alternative address



Disabled fans' ticket prices – frozen for the second season running

We are also discussing other ideas and strategies that fans have sent to us with the club, these ideas include

- ☛ numerous membership issues (future meeting topic)
- ☛ the removal or necessity of game categorisation
- ☛ the introduction of more or modification of current tiered structure
- ☛ season ticket options (eg. early bird discounts, fee-free purchase and interest-free loans)
- ☛ Player contribution to the £200k fund to assist away fans with ticket cost etc.
- ☛ International ticket pricing - numerous ideas regards international fans obtaining tickets currently being discussed with the "once in a lifetime" ticket being most regularly asked about

4. International

Over the past 12 months, the International East and West constituencies have been extremely active in helping both supporters and the club with a wide variety of issues from around the world. We received over a thousand emails, and while we cannot respond directly to everyone we do our best to provide some general advice or bring some of the more topical issues forward to create an actionable item with the Executives at Liverpool FC.



LFC vs AC Milan, Bank of America stadium, Charlotte, North Carolina.

As the team does better on the field, the level of activity similarly increases and we have received emails from literally every corner of the globe with nearly 100 countries being represented. Typically we receive requests in helping with the following:

- ? Tickets (which unfortunately...we don't have and cannot provide!)
- ? Fan packs, signed LFC photo, an autographed shirt or meet a player.
- ? Something that will aid a charitable organization or an event
- ? Help with a birthday or wedding event.
- ? A trial with Liverpool FC
- ? Information on how to set up an Overseas Supporters Club
- ? Information on how to set an International Academy
- ? Things to do around Liverpool

...and many other areas relating to things which may have happened during a visit to Anfield or wherever the club may travel such as South East Asia, Australia and North America (as they have done in the pre-season in the past two summers). Issues with the international fan base are unique especially when you add in the complexity and cost associated with travel in addition to securing a ticket. Throw in a TV scheduling change and all of a sudden we have a major problem! Some of the more unique requests range from fans wanting to sing YNWA prior to the start of a game at the ground, junior football teams wanting to know if they could put the Liverbird emblem on their kits, to changing of seats to accommodate family and friends sitting together and even to wedding invitations for players! Where we can, we try and put these supporters in contact with the right department to help them as best we can. And obviously where we receive notes of help for fans who have fallen ill or have been involved in a serious accident, we certainly will do our best to try and get them whatever help they need from the club.

Hillsborough 25th Anniversary

As a group who represent supporters, it seems only fitting that we conclude our Annual Report for 2014 with the 25th Anniversary of the Hillsborough disaster, where 96 of our fellow fans lost their lives and hundreds more were injured or had their lives changed forever.

Much has been written about the devastating events that unfolded at Hillsborough on the 15th April 1989 and the courageous souls who have led the crusade for justice for their loved ones and the survivors. Twenty-five years on we still stand shoulder to shoulder with the club, the city, the families, the campaigners, the survivors and the wider LFC fan base.



LFC SC donated scarf



Scarf display Hillsborough 25th Anniversary

To commemorate the 25th anniversary of the disaster, LFC launched a campaign to create a global sign of unity for the annual memorial service held on April 15 2014. The club asked fans of any sport, from anywhere in the world to donate a scarf - all those received were laid out on the pitch at Anfield on the day of the service in the shape of the number '96'.

The Supporters' Committee, who had representatives at the service, donated a scarf with a simple message, *"Always on our minds, forever in our hearts"*.



Please let us know what you think

There are still a number of areas where we are working with the club to continue to make improvements so please let us know if you have any issues that you wish us to raise on your behalf. Remember, we are here to represent you!

Honorary President: HonoraryPresident@liverpoolfcsc.com

Disabled Supporters: Disabled-Supporters@liverpoolfcsc.com

LGBT Supporters: LGBT-Supporters@liverpoolfcsc.com

Female Fans: Female-Supporters@liverpoolfcsc.com

Black Asian Minority Ethnic: BAMESupporters@liverpoolfcsc.com

International fans (West) Email: International-west@liverpoolfcsc.com

Season Ticket Holders & Hospitality: Standhospitality-supporters@liverpoolfcsc.com

Non Season Ticket Holders & Official Members: nonsthandmembers@liverpoolfcsc.com

Official Supporters' Clubs: LFC-Official-Supporters-Clubs@liverpoolfcsc.com

Fans in the Merseyside area: Merseyside-Supporters@liverpoolfcsc.com

International fans (East): International-east@liverpoolfcsc.com

Fans who attend away games: away-game-supporters@liverpoolfcsc.com

Families & Young People: Family-Supporters@liverpoolfcsc.com



The 2013/14 LFC Supporters' Committee thank you for your incredible support