

Liverpool FC Supporters' Committee

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



ANNUAL REPORT 2015



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Honorary President's Foreword



This was the third year for me in the role of Honorary President of the Liverpool FC Supporters' Committee and I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone on the Committee for giving me their vote of confidence for another year. This year we had the excellent support of Bob Humphries as Chair once again and two joint Vice-Chairs, Anna Burgess and Paul Amann. I'd like to thank them all for their hard work and commitment to committee matters, but an extra heartfelt thank you goes out to Bob Humphries, whose term of office has now come to an end. Bob was a founding member of the Committee and was an inspirational Chair. He provided fair and wise judgement and guidance for his entire term of office and often went above and beyond the call of duty. He will be sorely missed. I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank the other members whose term of office came to an end and were also instrumental in the success of the Committee right from the beginning, Sam Armstrong and Damien Moore and thank you to Laura Woodcock, too.

The new committee structure this year allowed the Committee to be much better focused and more effective in representing you, the supporters but we have decided to create a new role for the coming season and that is for the Under 25's, which we believe is an extremely important voice.

We remain committed to doing our very best on behalf of you, the supporters and welcome the opportunity to interact either face-to-face at our fan forums or via our official emails. The Committee is your voice and only effective if you use it, so please do!

We are all looking forward to making even further progress this season and we are looking forward to working with our new Committee members to make a difference for our great supporters wherever we can.

With best wishes,

Karen Gill
Honorary President Liverpool FC Supporters' Committee

Chair's Report



Welcome to the 2015 Annual Report which we hope will give you a good overview of the Liverpool FC Supporters' Committee's work on behalf of all supporters over the last 12 months.

It is now 4 years since I started on the Committee and is now time for me to step down both as the representative for season ticket holders and hospitality fans but also as Chair. We will welcome 5 new members to the Committee covering 'Supporters under 25', 'Official Liverpool FC Supporters' Clubs', 'Family match goers', 'Female fans' and of course 'Season Ticket Holders and hospitality fans'. I wish them all well in their new roles.

The Stadium expansion can now be clearly seen and is still planned to be open in time for the 2016/17 season when more supporters will have the opportunity to attend Anfield on a more regular basis. Discussions are ongoing with the Club to ensure all categories of supporters are catered for with tickets being priced accordingly.

In finishing, the Club are extremely fortunate that it enjoys such a hard core of dedicated followers and it has been an absolute privilege to get to know many of you. I must also say a special mention to my fellow Committee members, both past and present, who have continuously demonstrated their commitment and passion for their fellow supporter. Thank you for your support as Chair and good luck in the future.

YNWA
Bob

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
2. Merseyside residents
3. Under 25s
4. Official Liverpool Supporters' Clubs (UK & Europe)
5. International Fans & OLFSC Rest of the World
6. Disabled supporters
7. Non-season ticket holders and members
8. Away fans
9. Female fans
10. LGBT fans
11. BAME supporters
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

Five positions on the LFC Supporters' Committee were up for election for this coming season. They were 'Supporters under 25', 'Official Liverpool FC Supporters' Clubs', 'Family match goers', 'Female fans' and 'Season Ticket Holders and hospitality fans.' 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 now has three sub committees as follows;

- Communication
- Equality
- International

Key achievements for 2014/15

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

These 'fan forums' take place prior to our quarterly meetings with LFC officials and give fans the chance to meet the committee in person and ask questions. All questions raised are put to the LFC officials 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.

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:

- Articles and visibility in Home programmes and Monthly Magazine
- Contributed on Radio Merseyside Total Football show
- Appeared on the BBC Sport website and took part in a BBC Five Live debate

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



LFC SC Social Media activity

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



<https://www.facebook.com/LiverpoolFCSC>



@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.

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

LFC launch Changing Places Facility

In conjunction with LFCSC, Club Officials and the LDSA a changing places facility was installed in the Kop to meet the needs of our disabled fan base and fans have benefited from it a great deal since it was launched at the home game against Sunderland last season along with myself, Ryan Edwards, his mum Rachel, Beverley Christian and her sister Diane Allen and Vice Chair of the LDSA Tom Hutchinson and of course Michelle Kirk LFC Equality & Inclusion Officer and disability stewards Sue and Chris.

Katie Price, disabled representative for the Liverpool FC Supporters' Committee, added: "It is great news that the Club has been awarded gold standard for the Changing Places facility. This now allows all disabled fans the ability to use this and the have an overall improved match day experience."



Steve Chegwin's surprise visit to Melwood

I had worked with Steve 'Cheggars' Chegwin for 13 years until his retirement after 42 years earlier this year. I was asked by his boss Andy Pritchard if there was anything I could do as Steve had not let his disability stop him from doing a day's work and as he was a massive LFC Fan (Andy's a Burnley fan) he wanted to give him something to remember as a thank you.



Steven Chegwin, known as Cheggars to his many friends had worked as a cleaner for the North West Ambulance Service for 42 years.

Through change management Steve opted to take redundancy and the opportunity that this gave him to retire. Steve has always been a Liverpool supporter and used to go to home games as often as he could, his Brother Stan is still a season ticket holder.

Steve has worked hard for the Ambulance Service and has overcome his disability in his work, and he is a pleasure to be around and always cheerful.

His manager Andy Pritchard thought it would be nice if as part of his goodbye to the Ambulance Service that Steve got to meet some of his heroes. With tremendous help from Katie Price who works as a receptionist at the Ambulance Service as well as being the disabled supporters representative for Liverpool Football Club Supporters Committee, there were some undercover plans put in place to give Steve a wonderful send off.

Firstly as part of the actual send-off celebrations Andy collected a letter from Brendan Rodgers, this letter was not only a thank you for Steve's service to the Trust, but also an invitation for Steve and his Brother Stan to visit Melwood and meet the squad alongside watching them train.

Steve thoroughly enjoyed the day and was made most welcome by all at Melwood, and not only met his heroes, but got to have his photograph taken with many of them too.

I would like to take this opportunity to pass thanks to all who were involved in making this visit possible and in particular Katie Price, Brendan Rodgers and Danielle McNally, some truly remarkable people helping to make it a very special send off to Steve Chegwin as he moved into his retirement.

LFC LGBT supporters have continued to receive the club's support on a variety of issues in the 2014/15 season. The club investigated reported incidents of hate crime and discrimination. A Nottingham based student completed his dissertation on Homophobia in Football citing the work of Liverpool FC through an interview with the Committee's LGBT Supporters' Representative.

In November 2014, the Liverpool Echo interviewed the Committee's LGBT Supporters' Representative following claims that the club's underperformance was due to its

support of Liverpool Pride. Whilst the club has continued to support Liverpool Pride, it's noteworthy that since Liverpool Ladies FC marched in 2012, they have gone from strength to strength winning the WSL twice!

The club undertook three significant public displays of support:

IDAHOBIT

On 17th May 2015 LFC celebrates and supported the International Day against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT) by raising the rainbow flag at Anfield.

The day has arguably become one of the most important days for the LGBTI communities' worldwide. It provides groups the chance to raise global awareness of the situation faced by Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex as people who may also be part of the LFC family. As well as promoting Human Rights for everyone regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or expression.



Mersey Marauders FC 10th Anniversary

Following a request by Mersey Marauders to our Committee's LGBT Supporters' Representative, the club agreed to LFC's Academy hosting Mersey Marauders FC

(Liverpool's LGBT football team) in a match vs rivals Village Manchester. This kicked off Mersey Marauders 10 year anniversary celebrations.



Liverpool Pride

On 1 August, LFC staff and supporters marched at the sixth Liverpool Pride. Despite some of the worst summer weather of the year, thousands of marchers persevered to walk on through the rain. The club's banner of support attracted plenty of attention, with many of the spectators cheering us on. Liverpool Pride's theme of Love is no Crime highlighted the the continuing struggle for freedom and rights by many LGBT people, including LGBT supporters of LFC in many places around the world.

Ahead of Liverpool Pride, LGBT Supporters and Liverpool Pride received a video message of support from Colin Farrell via Frank Cottrell Boyce, the video then went viral with over 20,000 views in under 48 hours. See link:

<https://www.facebook.com/LiverpoolFCLGBTSupporters/videos/1096894680429221/?! =2679409016885169347>.

3. International

The two International members received approximately 2500 emails in the past year between them from fans all over the world. The content varied from praise, complaints and requests. Replies are sent to all or forwarded to the club to follow up.

The most common requests are for charity donations, signed merchandise, ticket help and wishes for birthdays and weddings.

Many requests to the International members vary from the other committee members as fans travelling (or wanting to travel) to Anfield will be attending for the first and possibly only time, and the game itself is a small part of the experience. We help and give advice on places to stay, club tours, and merchandise opportunities. Ticket requests are plentiful, but it's not something that we can help with.



Liverpool v Adelaide utd (Adelaide Oval)

In July with the club touring Australia again, the international –East member (Matthew) was heavily involved in the fans planning and successful execution of events, as his home city (Adelaide) was one stop on the tour. These 'extra' one off events involve direct communication between the club and the supporters committee. It helps both sides ensure fans overseas get their chance to feel part of the club, rather than relying on TV/Internet to follow the team at sometimes-unsocial hours.

4. Ticketing Update

Given the ongoing discussions about ticketing and more importantly affordability of tickets, the end of 2014 saw the formation of Ticketing Working Group.

Representatives from the Supporters' Committee, Spirit of Shankly Supporters' Union and the Spion Kop 1906 group now meet regularly with club officials to discuss & cover these matters.

Discussions are ongoing and a number of meetings have been held.

As most will already know Liverpool FC announced a price freeze on all general admission matchday tickets for the 2015-16 Premier League season.

Working in collaboration with the Ticketing Working Group a further announcement was made and Ian Ayre, Liverpool's chief executive officer, said: "Following our recent announcement to freeze general admission season ticket prices and reduce junior season ticket prices, we are now pleased to announce a freeze on all general admission matchday ticket prices for next season.

"We have worked in collaboration with the ticketing working group as we look at practical initiatives to increase accessibility and affordability of tickets at Anfield.

"We now have an opportunity, with the Main Stand expansion providing increased capacity for the 2016-17 season, to explore further ticketing initiatives with the group."

Bob Humphries, former chair of the Supporters' Committee and member of the ticketing working group, said: "We are pleased to see that the club has listened to our concerns about ticket prices and have, at least in the short-term, agreed to change their proposals and freeze prices to allow us time to work with them to find solutions.

"In the coming months we will be meeting to discuss pricing in the new stadium and making it more affordable and accessible for current supporters and for the future generations of young supporters."

More information will be made available as the discussions progress.

5. Miscellaneous

Liverpool FC fans are the recipients of this year's Barclays Fair Play – Fans of the Season 2014/15 Award.

The award, which is presented to the Barclays Premier League Club whose supporters are deemed to have been the best-behaved, was awarded to LFC after their fans impressed during the 2014/15 season.

Alongside the award, the Club also received £20,000 from the FA Charity Committee, which can be used to provide a donation to a charity of choice or fund initiatives that enhance the positive atmosphere in stadium or that directly benefit supporters. The Club will liaise with its Official Supporters' Committee to decide what the funds will be used for.

To promote positive behaviour, the Football Association established a Fair Play competition, with all Barclays Premier League matches and the behaviour of fans at matches being assessed by delegates.

For behaviour of fans, points are awarded for positive verbal support and recognition of outstanding play by the opposition, as well as respect for match officials and opposing fans.

Ian Ayre, Chief Executive Officer, Liverpool Football Club, said: "We are delighted to receive this award on behalf of our fans, who are a real credit to the Club.

"We are very privileged to have such a passionate fanbase who support the team both at home and away and conduct themselves in a manner that reflects what the LFC family is all about."

Bob Humphries, Chair of the LFC Official Supporters' Committee, added: "This is a great achievement for the fans and one which they should be very proud of.

"We will work with the Club on behalf of the fans to decide how the funds can be used to reward them for their continued support and loyalty."

The Barclays Fair Play – Fans of the Season 2014/15 Award will be on display at the Club's Liverpool ONE store from Monday 13th July 2015.



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: Karen Gill

Email: HonoraryPresident@liverpoolfcsc.com

Disabled Supporters: Katie Price

Email: Disabled-Supporters@liverpoolfcsc.com

LGBT Supporters: Paul Amann

Email: LGBT-Supporters@liverpoolfcsc.com

Female Fans: Tara Fisher

Email: Female-Supporters@liverpoolfcsc.com

Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Supporters: Yunus Lunat

Email: BAMESupporters@liverpoolfcsc.com

Season Ticket Holders and Hospitality: Tony Fitzgerald

Email: Standhospitality-supporters@liverpoolfcsc.com

Non Season Ticket Holders & Official Members: Roy Heaney

Email: nonsthandmembers@liverpoolfcsc.com

Official Supporters' Clubs: Lee Foley

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

Fans in the Merseyside area: Graham Smith

Email: Merseyside-Supporters@liverpoolfcsc.com

International fans: Matthew Selby

Email: International-east@liverpoolfcsc.com

Fans who attend away games: Anna Burgess

Email: away-game-supporters@liverpoolfcsc.com

Family Match Goers: Ian Byrne

Email: Family-Supporters@liverpoolfcsc.com

Supporters Under 25: Bella Ainsworth

Email: Supporters-under25@liverpoolfcsc.com



The 2014/15 LFC Supporters' Committee thank you for your unbelievable support