

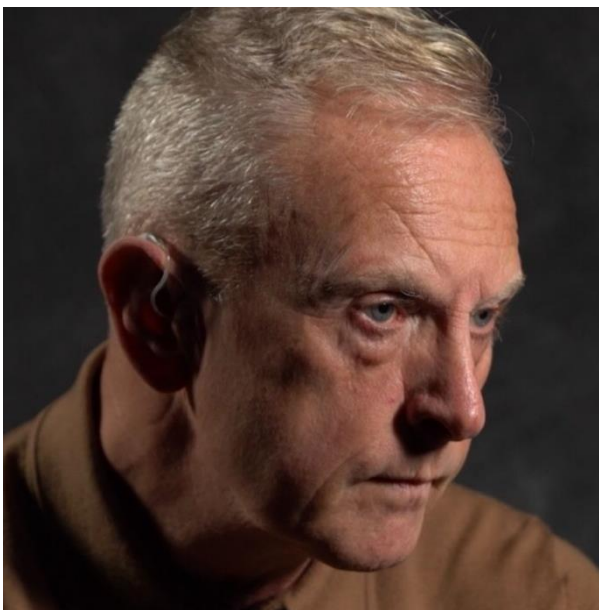
SPIRIT OF SHANKLY

NEWSLETTER TO MEMBERS

ISSUE 2 | DECEMBER 2022



End-of- year update from SOS Chair Joe Blott



On the pitch it was a mix of celebration and heartbreak – two domestic cup trophies, so close to the Premier League title again and another Champions League final. The manager and players did us proud, playing every single minute that could be played, and the fans were with the team every step of the way.

Off the pitch, we faced significant challenges, especially Paris, but we also had the usual tests with

football authorities surrounding ticket allocations, prices, access issues, fixture changes and kick-off times. We also continued to work with LFC, and challenge them, on similar issues but more focused on Anfield.

Engagement with the club is vital for supporter questions. It is also important that the club is held to account on other points. In the past 12 months, SOS have worked tirelessly to ensure supporters are treated fairly.

Out of the failed attempt to create the European Super League, we have worked with the Club to improve fan engagement and input into decision-making, but also to provide consent (or veto) of existential issues affecting LFC. This work was completed in July 2022 with the launch of the Supporters Board and has been recognised as a benchmark for other Premier League clubs to aspire to (see page 3 for a separate article on this issue). **This article is continued on page 2.**

End-of-year update from SOS Chair Joe Blott (continued from page 1)

Following the debacle in Paris, and alongside other Premier League clubs, SOS are pushing for fan involvement in UEFA club competitions and revenue distribution reform as a member of Football Supporters Europe. Again, we will engage with LFC and do all we can to ensure the views of our fans are at the forefront of the UEFA decision-making process.

We have continued to ensure ticket prices, supporter engagement and banning and sanctions processes have been discussed with the club and these remain high on our agenda.

Unfortunately, we are all aware of an increase in abhorrent chanting from opposition fans, especially in relation to Hillsborough and food poverty, and have united with a number of fan groups to try to improve matters and educate others. Sadly, this behaviour continues and we are now working with the FSA, LFC and Premier League to address this issue, especially as the impacts of those chants are sorely felt by Hillsborough families and survivors.

We continue to work with our colleagues at the LDSA and Kop Outs to improve inclusion of all supporters within our club. We again backed the Rainbow Laces Campaign and will continue to work with marginalised groups in our supporter community.

We continue to support the work of Fans Supporting Foodbanks and applaud those members whose generosity has helped people in our L4 community.

We have stepped up our work, partnering with the Vauxhall Law Centre to provide welfare rights advice and also set up guitar lessons in the community, not only to nurture talent but also help people's mental health and well-being. We also hope to introduce a food pantry in the area in the new year, mirroring the one we currently fund in L8.

It's been another difficult and busy year and I would like to thank my fellow committee members for their commitment and more importantly all of our members for your ongoing support. I wish you and your loved ones a healthy and happy Christmas and New Year.

**Joe Blott
Chair, Spirit of Shankly**

Fan Led Review - One Year On

Twelve months on from publication of the Review into football governance by Tracey Crouch MP, gaps still remain in football and political circles to implement its recommendations. Action remains imperative.

Stark examples of some of the ongoing problems in the game, including the sanctioning of then-Chelsea owner and the problems at Derby County that threatened their existence, show there is no room for complacency.

You can read the 'FLR - One Year On' report [here](#)



We are pleased that our work with LFC has been acknowledged and highlighted in the update report:

“Some clubs had also taken the opportunity to embrace reform of their own fan engagement. Working in close collaboration with fan groups, clubs, including Liverpool, Manchester United, Cambridge United, Doncaster Rovers and MK Dons, have adopted new measures to improve fan engagement. This close cooperation shows that clubs and fans can collaborate effectively. They are not natural enemies.”

“In the past year, several clubs have taken on board the recommendations of the FLR and implemented Shadow Boards in some form or another. This includes one of the biggest clubs, Liverpool FC whose adoption of an innovative ‘Consent, Consult, Engage’ model with legal obligations for fan engagement demonstrates that even the Premier League elite can, if sufficiently willing, implement extensive fan engagement in club operations.”

“One of the biggest clubs in the world, Liverpool FC, have entered into an arrangement with fans which gives fans consent over certain heritage items. It is hard to see why, if Liverpool can do this, any other club should fear giving fans this kind of role in their club.””

Challenging Man City over Carabou Cup prices



Ref: Manchester City v Liverpool, Carabao Cup Tie, December 22 2022

Dear xxxx

Ticket prices for visiting fans for the above fixture have been announced as follows:

- Adult: £27.50
- Over 65 (65+): £25
- Young adult (18-21): £25
- Juniors (Under 18): £15

We note that ticket prices for visiting fans to the Etihad in the previous round, against another Premier League team, Chelsea, were as follows:

- Adult: £15
- Senior (65 and over): £12.50
- 18-21: £12.50
- Under 18: £5

There can be no justification for an 80% increase in adult prices, a 100% increase in young adults and seniors tickets and a staggering 200% increase in under 18 prices.

We wish to challenge this unwarranted price increase, which appears to be nothing more than a chance to fleece Liverpool FC supporters just three days before Christmas during a cost-of-living crisis.

We urge you to rethink your pricing plan for this game and bring it in line with that of the previous fixture against Chelsea.

Yours sincerely

Joe Blott
Chair
Spirit of Shankly

We recently challenged Manchester City over their staggering increased pricing for tickets for the forthcoming Carabou Cup match.

Regrettably they would not alter their prices - as you can see from their response below.

This is very disappointing but we will however continue to challenge clubs where we believe they are seeking to profit simply because they are playing Liverpool and expect a big away following.

Manchester City reply:

Dear Joe

Thank you for your email.

Prices for our matches are determined on an individual basis and take into consideration a range of factors including the competition, stage of the competition (for Cup matches) and the opponent.

Liverpool FC were consulted and agreed to this pricing structure and we would also note that the prices for this match are less than the equivalent match in the Premier League between our clubs and the away supporter price cap.

Yours sincerely

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Guitar Workshops

On Thursday 17 November, in conjunction with The Church pub on Oakfield Rd, Anfield, SOS started a 10-week programme of guitar music workshops.

The enrolment session was very well attended and generous donations of guitars by *Jamie Webster, Echo & the Bunnymen, The Farm, The Lightning Seeds, Inhaler, Jay Lewis, Transalpino, Taggy's bar, The Grove, King Charles, Andy Hodgson* and *SMC Entertainments* meant not having an instrument was not a barrier to learning to play.

The workshops are for over-16s, but we are looking to extend this to all age groups in the coming months. If you are interested, email:

peter@spiritofshankly.com



Ajax a blueprint for Euro aways

What a pleasure it was to go to a European away and be treated like a human being!

The policing and stewarding of this match needs to be a blueprint for all European away games.

SOS membership drive hitting the mark

Committee members Mark Johnson and Paul Khan have been helping to recruit new SOS members.

Mark has been giving away free Spirit of Shankly bookmarks and greeting Liverpool fans arriving in the city on matchdays. To join, new members just scan a QR code on the bookmark.

Website



Membership



Contact Us



Paris Update

Following requests from Spirit of Shankly, Dr Tiago Rodrigues (Chair of the Independent Panel) provided this update on 25 November 2022:

"Concerning the publication date, I had initially indicated that I would endeavour to publish the final report by the end of November 2022. However, due to the high level of engagement with the process shown by the majority of stakeholders, the Review has gathered a substantial volume of evidence and continues to do so. The Panel is now engaged in analysing all the material and drafting the different parts of the report and is making good progress. Still, as a result of the volume of evidence gathered and the subsequent work involved, the team has requested some additional time to properly perform these different stages in order to publish the final report; this implies that the publication of the final version of the report is going to happen after the end of November.

"It is important that the Report is published as soon as possible but it is also vital that it is thorough and accurate. We are doing our very best to publish the report as soon as possible and I will let you know as promptly as we have a publication date. UEFA was already informed earlier this week."

It is disappointing it is taking so long and it is now more than six months since the match, but it is encouraging that the panel appears to be taking necessary care and diligence. We will continue to press for updates and keep members informed.

European away collections

Working in tandem with the Supporter's Board, we have made representations on behalf of European away travellers around the club's desire to enforce the collection of match tickets.

Discussions are ongoing and, as per our previous announcements, while we understand some of the club's reasoning it does have a negative impact on supporters and their time when they're meant to be on holiday.

As a positive, while collections in Amsterdam were opposed, it was a relief to see that the process had improved. We were also pleased that the club listened to some of our feedback and reduced the number of people asked to collect.

Nonetheless, travelling out of our way to collect tickets is an unwelcome inconvenience and we'll continue to oppose it.

Sale of LFC?

In response to an article in The Athletic on 6 November 2022, claiming LFC was up for sale, FSG made the following statement: -

"There have been a number of recent changes of ownership and rumours of changes in ownership at EPL clubs and inevitably we are asked regularly about Fenway Sports Group's ownership in Liverpool.

"FSG has frequently received expressions of interest from third parties seeking to become shareholders in Liverpool.

"FSG has said before that under the right terms and conditions we would consider new shareholders if it was in the best interests of Liverpool as a club.

"FSG remains fully committed to the success of Liverpool, both on and off the pitch."

We have been in regular contact with LFC since, and their continued response has been there is no change and no further update, despite continued press speculation. Until there is something concrete coming from LFC, we will continue to monitor the situation.



SPIRIT OF SHANKLY

LIVERPOOL SUPPORTERS UNION

Website:

spiritofshankly.com

Email:

mc@spiritofshankly.com