

SPIRIT OF SHANKLY

NEWSLETTER TO MEMBERS

JANUARY 2023



Miserly Madrid Allocation

We continue to lobby over LFC's reduced allocation for the Champions League game at the Bernabeu in March. Liverpool are to get 1800 tickets instead of 3000-plus that UEFA rules state they are entitled to.

We are in contact with the club and, in a Football Supporters Europe [message](#), along with Liverpool Disabled Supporters Association (LDSA) and Accionistas y Socios del Futbol Espanol (FASFE), urge Real Madrid and the local authorities to do all they can to rectify the situation and give LFC the correct allocation.

Reds join forces to call for Government action on club ownership

SOS and Manchester United Supporters Trust (MUST) have together called for the upcoming Government White Paper on football to strengthen the rules around who can own and run clubs in England. [You can read the full statement here.](#)

Police apology for failings over Hillsborough

In a report, published 31 January, the police apologised for the "profound failings" of policing that led to the Hillsborough disaster, and for the "pain and suffering" endured for years by the families of those unlawfully killed. They have also pledged a new code of ethics and cultural change.

This comes as a national police response to the former Bishop of Liverpool James Jones' report into Hillsborough failings in 2017. Recommendations by James Jones have been adopted as part of the Hillsborough Law Now campaign, led by SOS committee member Ian Byrne MP in Parliament.

At the release of the report, Chair of the National Police Chiefs Council, Martin Hewitt, condemned the chants directed at Liverpool fans during games saying: "Action needs to be taken [by match police and stewards] to stop people."

SOS Birthday

January 2023 marks the 15th birthday of SOS. Back in January 2008, the situation at Liverpool FC led to a series of events off the pitch that forever changed the role of supporters in our football club. We had to act, we had to protest - so we did, and Spirit of Shankly was born. Today we are a registered Industrial and Provident Society and registered with the Financial Services Authority. We have a legal constitution and a democratically elected management committee. **As a Union we listen to members on the issues you face.** Loyal supporters need a voice and we will continue to be that voice.

10 times SOS have made a difference in the last 15 years

- 1.** SOS led the way on ousting the previous owners. We were the noise that wouldn't (and didn't) go away.

Liverpool supporters' union Spirit of Shankly hope the club's owners have learned a valuable lesson after their U-turn on ticket prices.

Fenway Sports Group (FSG) issued an apology on Wednesday evening and scrapped the controversial top-price £77 general admission ticket for next season that had caused Anfield fans to protest.



Liverpool back down on prices

Liverpool freeze majority of ticket prices for next season



- 2.** SOS stood up and let LFC know that £77 tickets in the new Main Stand was wrong. We backed the walk-out on 77 minutes, along with Spion Kop 1906.



- 3.** SOS backed Michael Shields and his family, lobbied the club for support and helped keep the family's campaign at the forefront of minds and in the media until he was freed.

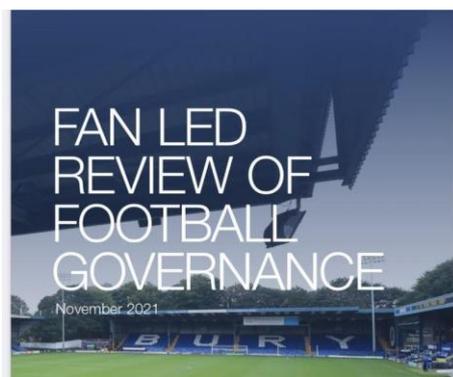
- 4.** SOS spearheaded the national campaign on rip-off away ticket prices and secured a maximum ticket price of £30 for all visiting supporters at Premier League fixtures.

5. SOS put on fairer, cheaper coach travel to matches, including getting fans to PSV and back - with a hotel room and ferry - for approximately £100 all in.

6. SOS stood tall and shouted loud about the absurdity and repulsiveness of the European Super League.



7. SOS are well organised, respected and governed - so much so that we were chosen to act as the club's recognised supporters' trust and now have a permanent role as the voice of fans within the club.



8. SOS made a significant contribution to the government's Fan Led Review into the future of football, ensuring UK clubs operate in the interest of supporters.

9. SOS challenged UEFA and the authorities in the aftermath of Paris, giving evidence to the French Senate with Liverpool Disabled Supporters' Association regarding our experiences in Paris.



10. SOS came together with an Everton fan group to establish Fans Supporting Foodbanks, feeding thousands in our city and sparking a network of fan-led foodbanks across the UK.

Thanks to SOS member Daniel Nicolson for this summary.

Update on UEFA Independent Inquiry Panel

It is now eight months since UEFA, following the distressing events at the Champions League final in Paris, announced an independent inquiry. It is now more than two months since findings of that inquiry were due to be published.



UEFA Independent Inquiry Panel need to publish findings

Following the unacceptable events at the UEFA Champions League Final on 28 May 2022 in Paris, UEFA announced, on 3 June 2022, they would be undertaking an independent inquiry into the "frightening and distressing events in the build-up to the UEFA Champions League Final at Stade de France on 28 May 2022 in Paris, on a night which should have been a celebration of European club football".

They went on to say: "No football fan should be put in that situation, and it must not happen again."

They stated the independent inquiry would (seek) "to identify shortcomings and responsibilities of all entities involved in the organisation of the final".

It is now January 2023, 7 months – more than 200 days – later and still we have no answers.

[You can read more about this on our website.](#)

SOS continues to seek progress on the inquiry and we acknowledge an update in December from Dr Tiago Rodrigues, who is leading the independent panel, but a lack of concrete information is concerning.

We implore UEFA and the Panel to provide reassurance that the investigation will be concluded imminently and lessons learnt be in place in time for the final in Istanbul in June.

Real Truth Legacy Project

SOS reps recently met with LFC and LFC Foundation to discuss support for [The Real Truth Legacy Project](#), championed by MP and SOS committee member Ian Byrne. It focuses on education regarding the Hillsborough disaster.

All key stage resources have been created and are currently being fact-checked by Professor Phil Scraton.

Discussions are taking place with LFC Foundation regarding them becoming a partner in the rollout to schools.



**The Real Truth
Legacy Project**

#JFT97

www.ianbyrne.org/the-real-truth

Community Update



Christmas Party

This was a great success with more than 100 local pensioners tucking into a three-course meal with entertainment from John O'Connell and Andy Bayley, 'the King of Swing.' Special thanks to chef Kev O'Rourke and his team, Mick Aitchison from [The Church](#) on Oakfield Road, Anfield, Fans Supporting Foodbanks and George Bevan.

Guitar workshop

The weekly sessions, held every Thursday at The Church, have been a great success. The 10-week course is due to finish in February, but we're looking to start another as soon as possible.



Art Club

As part of our community initiatives in the Anfield area, the Art Club started on Monday 23 January in The Church. Delivered by Creative Balance, 20 youngsters take part in weekly art sessions followed by a communal meal. The first week's theme was Chinese New Year.

Mobile Pantry SOS, LFC Foundation and Fans Supporting Foodbanks have been in discussion regarding a weekly Mobile Food Pantry in Anfield. We will confirm details once arrangements are finalised.

Hunger doesn't wear club colours Great to see solidarity from visiting Leicester fans in December, when a group of their fans met SOS members to donate to the Fans Supporting Foodbank collection.