

SPIRIT OF SHANKLY

NEWSLETTER TO MEMBERS

JULY/AUGUST 2023



Update from SOS Chair Paul Khan



SOS and the LFC Supporters Board

A couple of weeks ago, some of our management committee (MC) members, who also sit on the LFC Supporters Board (SB), attended a two-day familiarisation event with the club to gain a better understanding of its internal workings.

MC members Anna Burgess and Roy Bentham have been appointed as chairs of the SB Fans Forums Ticketing and Matchday Experience groups respectively; Paul Amann from Kop Outs has been voted chair of EDI and Harinder Singh, the Faith and Ethnicity rep, has become vice chair to Joe Blott. All votes were democratic and SOS did not put forward a candidate for the latter two positions.

For those of you who don't yet know Paul or Harinder, here is a brief introduction from the people themselves...

Harinder says: "I look to add, through dialogue and inclusion, the collective views of Liverpool fans, irrespective of their faith, ethnicity and/or culture or location in the world. I'll also be the person with the longest beard on the board, possibly the longest hair too! By day, I work in the investment banking and technical sector as a programme delivery lead on data and cyber security. I'm a dad of two children who are as Liverpool-mad as I have been for 40 years."

Update from SOS Chair Paul Khan (continued)

Paul says: "I was motivated to join the SB because it is important that the voices of LGBT+ fans are heard and measures taken to ensure safe attendance at the match.

"Away from football I work as an employment and skills policy officer at Liverpool City Region and I'm a trade union activist. I'm a volunteer on anti-bullying work in schools, a literary festival and a cooking and eating with refugees project in Liverpool. I've supported LFC for over 50 years and have a club membership."

SOS working groups

Over the past couple of months, SOS's management committee has taken on a new structure. We have set up a number of working groups so that people's skills and expertise can be better utilised and we can become more efficient and better positioned to serve the entire SOS membership.

We're still in the formative stages and we will communicate further as we progress. Here is the initial framework:

Club strategy

Dealing with the club directly and indirectly. Getting to know and liaising with decision makers and the club's plans and ambitions.

Community

Establishing projects within the local communities and continuing the work already being done, such as workshops, rights and welfare help, Greenhouse project, foodbanks and the organisation of the Shankly Cup.

Diversity

Establishing strong relationships with the diversity officer at LFC, Kop Outs and LDSA, working to strengthen club sanctions regarding discrimination and liaising with the club regarding the education of stewards home and away and a commitment to employing a diverse workforce.

Marketing

The long-term expansion of our membership base, with a focus on recruiting new, young members.

Matchday experience

Dealing with any problems and queries that occur at the ground on matchdays and beyond, including for example the club's bag policy. Helping members with supporter sanctions and banning orders.

SOS working groups (continued)

Media

Responsible for all communication from the union: statements, social media, website content and newsletters.

Organisation

Organising and liaising with relevant bodies, including the membership, for AGM and membership voting, attending GSAG meetings ahead of matchdays.

Planning

Responsible for the 'back office' and communication tools of SOS.

Supporters' Board

A conduit between SOS and the SB.

Technical

Responsible for the smooth running of all technical elements of our website and day-to-day membership administration.

Ticketing

Help and answer member queries and problems regarding season tickets, memberships and LFC's ticketing policy.

Travel

Organising coaches for away fixtures and alerting fans to relevant information for booking.

The European Football Fans Congress

We were at this event in Manchester in June. Members will have seen that UEFA President Čeferin attended the opening and appeared sincere in wanting positive change, talking about progress being measured against the next bidding process, which he said would be more robust and involve Football Supporters Europe. You will of course have your own view.

Some positive changes were announced, such as maximum pricing for European away tickets and UEFA agreeing to integrate the views of players (via FIFPRO Europe) and fans (via FSE) into its decision-making.

SOS and LFC supporter stock is currently very high. We were asked to speak at several sessions, to comment on many issues for UK and European fans and were regularly sought out by other groups.

Football Supporters Europe (FSE) and Football Supporters Association (FSA) AGMs positive for SOS

Both the FSE and FSA AGMs took place recently and were positive for us. Motions around tragedy chanting, disability and supporters boards were carried and we were asked to speak at the FSA AGM about our work since Paris. As always, it was good to get a view away from the Premier League and hear the experiences of fans across England and Europe. There is a lot of work for us to do but it was good to discuss issues in context and reflect on the positives as well as the challenges.

The tragedy chanting work we are leading on for the FSA is incredible. There is a strong commitment to end it, with the motion put forward by the Arsenal Supporters Trust unanimously carried.

[For more details of the FSA AGM you can read this round-up.](#)

Growing the SOS membership with a little help from our friends at RAOTL

We have been working with John Pearman from RAOTL to help us in our drive to attract new members. **Plus for every new subscriber to RAOTL during August, they will donate £5 to SOS!**

Spirit of Shankly



RAOTL are staunch supporters of Spirit of Shankly and encourage all LFC fans to join.

SOS were set up as a campaigning organisation and remain so, engaging with the club on issues affecting fans, individually and collectively. They were instrumental in away tickets being capped at £30, stopping the Super League fiasco and their work following the Paris debacle led to a ticket refund and apology from UEFA's Ceferin.

They organise coaches to all LFC away fixtures and offer help and support when needed.

But it's not just matchgoers they're there for. Since covid they've helped Fans Supporting Foodbanks and the city's pantries, are active in the Anfield community with activities such as art classes and guitar sessions.

Looking ahead, they aim to connect more with members and fans, working on questions that matter the most to you. So why not join now, for just £10, by scanning the QR code and help them realise their vision to become the biggest, strongest, and most effective fans union in the world.

spiritofshankly.com



SOS at Liverpool Pride 2023

We again marched alongside our friends and colleagues at Kop Outs at this year's Liverpool Pride.

It was great to see Liverpool Women's Supporters Group, LDSA, Football Supporting Foodbanks and LFC representatives in such a show of solidarity.

A huge thank you to members who reached out and joined Pride with us. Unity is strength.



Community Update

In the past year our activities programme in the local community has increased considerably.

- **Working with Creative Balance and LIPA graduates**, we have delivered successful arts clubs, youth theatre and guitar tuition to Anfield youngsters, with many showing standout talent according to the tutors. We would like to pass on a big thanks to The Church on Oakfield Rd, where these sessions are held. We are taking a break in the school holidays but hope to continue these initiatives in autumn.
- **The Welfare Rights sessions every Monday** are continuing and have become a valuable resource for the local community.