

SPIRIT OF SHANKLY

NEWSLETTER TO MEMBERS

ISSUE 17



Message from SOS Chair Paul Khan

Hi All,

I hope you are well. Well, it has been an eventful five or six weeks for the Union. Summoned by the club to an emergency Supporters Board (SB) meeting regarding ticket prices for next season, we were informed but *not* consulted on their decision to impose a 2% increase. We challenged them, in no uncertain terms, helped greatly by the mandate you have given us - 92% of members saying we should be campaigning for a decrease in both season-ticket and general-admission prices. The club said the price increase was set in stone and there was no room for negotiations.

The club then asked us to reconvene to further discuss the reasoning for the increase, but the Management Committee decided, on reflection, there was little point in doing this if no meaningful discussion and negotiation were to take place. We therefore took the decision to write to the club and declined to attend.

Some people have questioned the challenge of a 2% increase. The fact is for many, 2% is a lot during this cost-of-living crisis. Plus, this may only be the thin end of the wedge. Let me put this into context. In 1984 when I bought my first season ticket, it cost about £55 and general admission was about £3. The average salary, according to the Office of National Statistics, was £8,400 for a 25-29-year-old at that time. Now, a season ticket for the Kop is £760. If you equate that with an average salary today, I'd have to be earning over £121,800!

The point I am trying to make is the club are pricing out the average person, and especially younger matchgoers. We cannot let this carry on. And it's not just LFC; many other clubs have done it too.

We attended a scheduled SB meeting on 13 April and made the point, strongly, that we are not happy with the direction it is taking. The SB contract, signed between SOS and the club, was done in the spirit of consultation and meaningful discussion with supporters. Certain things that have happened in the past few months have made us question this.

From our perspective the meeting was quite heated, and we were supported by other supporter's group reps on the board.

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The club have acknowledged that mistakes have been made and suggested a meeting with myself and Joe Blott, chair of the SB, to try and iron out communication issues and how we can engage in the future in a way that is productive to both parties.

We have agreed to this, and we will inform you of the outcome in the next newsletter.

I'd like to thank you for completing the survey and the comments provided for improvement. **As promised, here are the results.**

We are now considering what actions to take over the coming months based on your feedback.

The heart and soul of SOS is that of a campaigning organisation and we and the club must never lose sight of this. Obviously, we hope and prefer to have positive dialogue with the club, but if that does not work, we will need to decide how to address this as we have done in the past.

To finish with the footy. We are all down, aren't we? Everyone wanted the season to finish on a high for Jürgen. If that now seems unlikely, let's as Jürgen would want, not give up until it is mathematically impossible.

The final two home games should be great events, with the flag day against Spurs and Jürgen's farewell game against Wolves. Let's all enjoy and be grateful for the fantastic nine years we've had with Jürgen and his team.

YNWA, Paul

Survey results

Thanks to everyone who completed the recent members survey and took the time to send in suggestions and recommendations for us to use in future mail-outs.

1. The Premier League have been in negotiations with the TV companies regarding a new financial deal that will result in increased revenues for all Premier League clubs. Should we be lobbying LFC to use a proportion of the monies received to reduce general admission ticket prices for all home games, thereby benefitting supporters for the inconvenience due to changed kick-off times and dates?

Yes 92.14%

No 7.86%

2. What are the biggest concerns around matchday?

Getting a ticket 49.67%

The cost of a ticket 28.48%

The atmosphere 21.84%

3. Should LFC offer priority-access cup final tickets to hospitality ticket holders?

Yes 6.05%

No 82.7%

Don't know 11.24%

4. Should LFC offer access to away games to hospitality ticket holders?

Yes 7.66%

No 81.01%

Don't know 11.34%

5. Should SOS lobby LFC to change this practice?

Yes 79.80%

No 5.56%

Don't know 14.65%

6. Should SOS be campaigning for maximum allocation for away fixtures in all competitions?

Yes 98.64%

No 1.36%

7. Should SOS be campaigning for increased allocation at all semi-finals and finals?

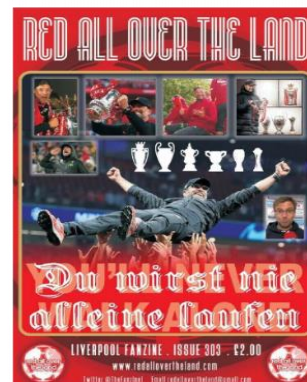
Yes 99.60%

No 0.40%

RAOTL Jürgen special issue

Red All Over The Land have produced a Jürgen special - a great keepsake! **Buy it outside the ground from one of their sellers on Sunday, or get it here:**

<https://redallovertheland.com/raotl-303>



Welcome to the SOS Management Committee

Helen Brown

An SOS member for many years, Helen has joined the MC as secretary. An Anfield regular for more than 20 years, she tells us why she's come on board.

"When I saw the ad for vacancies on the Management Committee, I told my partner I was going to apply. I wanted to get involved because I believe I have the skills and experience needed.

"My career background is very process and procedural driven, I come from the pharmaceutical sector which is very regulated.

"I hope to bring my organisational skills to the role and so help SOS become as efficient and effective as they can be and change things for the better.



"I want SOS to be the gold standard for supporters' trusts, I want to help make a difference and I'm really looking forward to getting involved.

"I want to participate in other areas too. There are a lot of campaigns going on at the moment and I'll be working with fellow MC member and Supporters Board chair Joe Blott with the partnerships he's involved in.

"I watch Liverpool home and away and am an advocate for an increased away allocations for fans. Obviously, ticket prices are a major issue, as are season tickets and members - and not just in the Premier League but the lower leagues too.

"I was a member of the old scheme and the European Travel Club and I've been a season-ticket holder since 2012."

Ticket increase protest

Following LFC's announcement regarding ticket-price increases for next season, Spion Kop 1906, backed by SOS, organised a protest by withdrawing their flags from the Kop before the home game against Atalanta.

The club have pressed ahead with the price rises, despite strong opposition, but we are committed to working with them to ensure fair prices for all regular matchgoing fans. [You can read our statement here.](#)



Also, one of our Management Committee members, Jay McKenna, sat down with football finance expert Kieran Maguire to talk about money in today's game.

[If you missed it, you can watch it here or click on the image below.](#)



Second Reading of the Football Governance Bill

SOS MC member Ian Byrne MP spoke about the need to place supporters at the heart of the game in Parliament last month at the second reading of the Football Governance Bill.

Click right to watch.



The Shankly Cup returns

We are thrilled that the Shankly Cup is back on this year and will take place on Saturday 8 June.

The youth football competition, founded by SOS, sees teams from Liverpool and Ayrshire battle it out in Scotland.

It's a brilliant day for the kids, who travel from Liverpool to meet their counterparts in Scotland, in the place where Shanks was born, and ensures the great man's legacy lives on.



Don't forget your flags!

And scarves, hats and rattles. It's flag day on the Kop for our game against Tottenham on Sunday to commemorate the 30-year anniversary of the Spion Kop's last Stand on 30 April 1994.

Former Players Fund

Special SOS thanks to author Peter Jones who wrote 'Sweeper Keeper' Tommy Lawrence. Peter donated £1,145 - collected from his recent book launch at the Church - to our fund for former LFC stars who played under Shankly.

Weekly advice sessions continue

For anyone who missed it, the weekly advice sessions at Homebaked, organised by SOS in partnership with Vauxhall Community Law and Information Centre, have been extended. **Help and support with benefit, debt and housing issues is now available on Mondays from 9.30am to 3pm.**