

# SPIRIT OF SHANKLY

NEWSLETTER TO MEMBERS

ISSUE 24



## A message from SOS Chair Paul Khan...

Well, it is that time of year again. Great to hear *O Come all ye Faithful* belting out from the Kop, let's hope we can continue to be joyful and triumphant! All we need now is a good rendition of Johnny Mathis on Boxing Day to complete the festive spirit!

The Stop Exploiting Loyalty campaign has certainly grown legs. I thought the protest along with our Manchester City comrades went really well. Good that we can put our rivalries to one side in pursuit of the greater good - fairer ticket process, protection of concessions and access for our young people. Good also to see United and Everton fans joining forces on the same day.

The protests certainly achieved much regional and national coverage, and you can read more about it later in the newsletter.

**The next major protest at Anfield is planned for the United game on 5 January, so please join us and show your support. We will also be protesting with our Spurs and West Ham friends at the forthcoming away games.**

Onto our community work...

I was privileged to say a few words at a fantastic production called *Common Ground* at the Liverpool Lighthouse earlier in the month, performed by youngsters who participate in the SOS drama club. The play told the story of the foundation of Everton FC and the subsequent split that resulted in the formation of LFC. The young people who delivered the production did an amazing job. And I'd like to say a big thank you to Anfield Youth Centre, MYC Youth Theatre, An Hour For Others, Whitefield Primary School and Leamington Dance.

**Additionally, a massive thank you to our own Peter Hooton, who organises so much of our community work, Katie and the team at UniStar Drama who take the weekly sessions with the kids, and The Church pub who provide affordable space for the workshops and food for those participating in the various clubs.**

You can read more about *Common Ground* further on in the newsletter.

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## A message from SOS Chair Paul Khan... (continued)

This Thursday, 19 December, we are hosting the SOS Christmas party for members of the Anfield community at The Church. Big thanks to them and I know it will be a wonderful day.

Finally, a big shout-out to Caldicot and Gloucester OLSC, Yorkshire Liverpool Supporters Club and LFCNY who have all made substantial donations to Fans Supporting Foodbanks via SOS. You are making a real difference to people who need it the most and on behalf of both SOS, FSF and the people you are helping, we would like to say a massive thank you.

Signing off now. Wishing you all the very best for Christmas and the New Year. 

Let's hope we can take our current form into 2025!

**Support and believe!**

**YNWA**

**Paul Khan, SOS Chair**

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## National Spotlight on Ticket Campaign

The push for fairer ticketing policies across the Premier League, proposed and led by Spirit of Shankly, has gained significant national attention and media coverage.

**A day of action during Liverpool's match against Manchester City and Manchester United's game with Everton amplified the FSA's Stop Exploiting Loyalty campaign, driving home the need to address ticket-price hikes and the targeting of concessions.**

Along with displaying the Stop Exploiting Loyalty banner across the divide in the Anfield Road End, SOS supported the campaign with a beermat initiative in pubs around the ground and city centre, as well as a city-wide poster campaign highlighting decades of inflation-busting price rises.

The campaign has been raised directly with the PL and LFC, with talks scheduled between the club and the Supporters Board, where SOS hold the majority voice, in the new year. The cause was further underlined by Manchester United's mid-season price hike that raised all available ticket prices at Old Trafford to £66, scrapping concessions for younger and older fans. Previously, tickets started at £40 for adults and £25 for children.

The PL's recent £12.25bn TV deal, up 17% from the last cycle, highlights how insignificant ticket revenues are to club finances, exposing the greed driving increases.

**Unity is our strength and we'll continue to work with other clubs supporters and encourage LFC fans to join SOS and keep fighting for a fairer game.**

You can watch highlights of the last protest [here](#).

# Common Ground

On Thursday 5 December, over 100 local youngsters performed *Common Ground*, a play about the history of local football, at the Liverpool Lighthouse on Oakfield Road to great acclaim.

## Here's how it happened...

UniStar Drama got involved with SOS drama sessions, which were struggling with low participation, in April. The aim was to use the universal appeal of football to engage children and young people who might not typically be involved in the arts.

Recognising football's deep roots in local culture, the project was designed to entertain and educate participants on the history and community spirit of the area.

With funding from SOS, UniStar Drama extended their reach into local schools. Collaboration was key and MyClubmoor, who run a youth theatre, were invited to incorporate football themes into their plays, which were showcased on the performance evening.

UniStar Drama founder, Katie also runs drama sessions as a volunteer at An Hour For Others and they also agreed to take part.

Inspired by founder Kev's suggestion, the celebrated Milk Cup Final of 1984 was a central theme. Exploring historic football events, like the Milk Cup Final and the tale of St. Domingos and the Everton/Liverpool split went down well with the group. SOS's Peter Hooton shared his knowledge on the origins of LFC and he attended a session, where he was interviewed by the children. His insight enriched the experience for the kids and mentors alike.

This initiative set out to create a sense of unity and pride and it's great to say it successfully showcased how collaboration and the arts can unite people, offering a celebration of local history and community bonds.

[Find out more about UniStar Drama.](#)

[Listen to Paul's speech below:](#)



## Happy 80<sup>th</sup> birthday Bobby



Everyone at SOS wished Bobby Graham many happy returns when he turned 80 last month.

**The Motherwell-born forward was signed as a youth player by Bill Shankly in 1961, graduating to the first team in 64 where he went on to score 42 goals in 137 games.**

After hearing from Bobby's family that he still talks about and adores Shankly, SOS sent him a statue of the great man as a birthday gift.

**Viva Bobby Graham!**

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## Thank you Brian

Back in August, SOS member Brian Omar, along with friends and family organised to walk the Camino de Santiago to raise funds for prostate cancer support.

**Brian founded Lads at Larks, a group for men with the disease and last week a van giving info and urging men to get tested was at Paisley Square, Anfield.**

**Sadly Brian passed away before he was able to see this, but he will be remembered for the mammoth work he did to raise awareness of prostate cancer.**

SOS send our deepest condolences to Brian's family at this time.

**YNWA.**

