



Meeting of the All Together Town (ATT) Panel

Wednesday, 23rd September 2020 – 19:00-21:00

Hosted Online

Note: These minutes were taken by the Huddersfield Town Supporters' Association (HTSA), not Huddersfield Town Association Football Club.

Present

Club representatives: Mark Devlin (CEO); David Threlfall-Sykes (Marketing & Communications Director); Andy Ward (Commercial Director); Supporter Services; the Ticket Office

Fan Groups: HTSA (3); Cowshed Loyal (1); Huddersfield Town Disabled Supporters' Club (1)

+ 14 panel members

Agenda

1. Season Cards
2. Return to Stadium Protocols
3. iFollow
4. Club Communications
5. Canalside
6. Role of ATT
7. Supporter Representation/Input on the Safety Advisory Group (SAG) – Deferred
8. Governance Reform ('Sustain The Game' Proposals) – Deferred

1. Season Cards

The clubs have sold approximately 11,000 season cards.

In response to questions on refunds, the club explained the following:

- (a) Fans are entitled to a refund on 2020/21 season cards.

Huddersfield Town Supporters Society Limited

Registered in the UK by the Financial Conduct Authority as a Community Benefit Society
Reg No. 29567R



(b) Refunds are being dealt with on a case by case basis.

Club representatives said that, to date, there have been a low number of refund requests. They thanked fans for their continued support during such difficult times.

2. Return to Stadium Protocols

The government's latest coronavirus guidelines mean the planned return of fans from 1st October has been delayed. The club is currently attempting to clarify when fans might return. According to some sources, it could be March, though this has not been confirmed.

The club were planning to host 6,250 fans, which equates to 25 percent of the stadium's capacity. Season card holders would therefore be guaranteed the opportunity to attend every other match through the ballot system. At present, the club is unsure whether hospitality sections of the stadium will be open. If they are, some form of social distancing will have to be implemented.

When the new guidelines were announced, the club was in the process of identifying "social bubbles" among season card holders (maximum of six people per bubble), but this has understandably been put on hold.

Supporters will be required to sign a code of conduct relating to social distancing before attending matches. This code of conduct is intended to complement the existing season card terms and conditions and disciplinary measures. Supporter Services said they would circulate the draft code of conduct to panel members and ask for feedback via email and at the next ATT meeting.

Club representatives stressed that all these measures are a work in progress and will be continually reviewed and updated.

3. iFollow

HTSA shared the results of their iFollow survey, which is still running. The results show that an overwhelming majority of users are unhappy with every aspect of the service, including audio, video quality, the interface, and EFL's customer service. They also show that 91 percent of users believe that iFollow is not value for money.

Huddersfield Town Supporters Society Limited

Registered in the UK by the Financial Conduct Authority as a Community Benefit Society
Reg No. 29567R



Club representatives acknowledged these frustrations, explaining that they have made the EFL aware of similar issues. In addition, the club is attempting to provide users with as much guidance and support as possible. The club stated that they expect the service to improve over the season and are lobbying aggressively on fans' behalf.

Panel members also complained about false charges, asking how many people had been affected and whether some people who have been charged are still unaware. Club representatives said they would speak to the EFL in an attempt to answer these questions.

Panel members further raised concerns about the inability of season card holders who are under-18 to access iFollow, pointing out that not all live with or know an adult season card holder.

Club representatives observed that under-18s received an iFollow code for the Norwich game, and this should be the same for all games in the future.

They added that clubs are currently in negotiations with Sky Sports to ensure that season card holders gain access to *all* away games. A panel member asked whether season card holders would be able to accrue loyalty points by purchasing passes for away games if these negotiations failed. The Ticket Office said they would consider such a scheme.

4. Club Communications

Several panel members expressed disappointment with the club's recent communication strategy. They suggested that it has resulted in an information vacuum that could undermine trust between fans and the club. However, the rest of the panel had mixed opinions.

Mark Devlin and David Threlfall-Sykes acknowledged these concerns and explained that the club is continually evaluating how it can improve communication with the fans. One example provided was the newly launched *Preview Show*, which provides fans with an insight into the club's philosophy, strategy, and operations, both on and off the pitch.



Some panel members were unaware of the *Preview Show* and other similar initiatives. Others mentioned the possibility of a more direct approach, with directors or even the chairman addressing fans via a video interview or question and answer session.

Club representatives said they would take the feedback on board.

The Huddersfield Town Disabled Supporters Club asked whether the club could make programmes available online. Club representatives confirmed that they are in the process of making sure this happens.

Both Cowshed Loyal and HTSA thanked all Huddersfield Town employees for their hard work, emphasising their importance to the club and wider community.

5. Canalside

Club representatives stated that the current phase of redevelopment is almost complete.

In response to questions from panel members, they confirmed that the three-storey building outlined in the original plans has not been built. Mark Devlin explained that the club has planning permission for the building, which may be acted upon in the future. He also stated that the club has invested approximately £6-7 million on the redevelopment project.

Some panel members were disappointed that the original plans had been scaled back, while others questioned the club's lack of communication on the subject.

Mark Devlin responded by assuring those present that the training facilities are excellent. He did, however, recognise that the club's communications have not been as clear as they could have been. David Threlfall-Sykes said that the club will release further information once the current phase of redevelopment is complete, which is expected to be a matter of weeks.

6. Role of the ATT Panel

Some panel members suggested that the ATT panel has "lost its focus" and needs a "reset."



HTSA suggested that the ATT Panel should implement a schedule to improve attendance and engagement. Club representatives said they would consider a more regular, set schedule.

HTSA and other panel members also asked whether it would be possible to improve representation on the panel to better reflect the demographics of the club's fanbase. Supporter Services said that they would circulate ideas and good practice from other clubs.

Supporter Services also said they were considering how to better use surveys to engage with fans.

7. Supporter Representation/Input on the Safety Advisory Group (SAG) – Deferred

Due to time constraints, panel members suggested that the meeting should be brought to a close without discussing agenda items 7 and 8.

In light of the Sports Ground Safety Authority's (SGSA) latest recommendations, HTSA and Supporter Services agreed to speak separately about supporter representation/input on the Safety Advisory Group (SAG).

8. Governance Reform ('Sustain The Game' Proposals) – Deferred

HTSA said they would submit a formal request for the club to back the 'Sustain The Game' campaign.