

Newport County AFC

Fan Engagement Plan 2025/26

Chairman's introduction

Welcome to Newport County's Fan Engagement Plan for 2025/26.

As majority owner of our club, I am proud to present our vision, aims, values and objectives for fan engagement. Our principles for fan engagement remain unchanged from those we first set out for 2024/25, but this plan also highlights where our approach has evolved as the club's new ownership model has become embedded.

At Newport County we believe that our fans should be at the heart of everything we do, and their loyal support is what drives us to succeed both on and off the pitch.

Our overarching vision remains to create a truly inclusive and interactive fan experience that fosters a strong sense of community and belonging among our supporters. We aim to engage with our fans in meaningful ways to provide them with unique and memorable experiences that go beyond matchdays. We will do that in consultation with our Supporters' Trust, as part owners of the club, and will build on our existing mechanisms to ensure that the views of all fans can be heard.

Our values of integrity, passion and respect will guide all our interactions with fans, and we are committed to building strong relationships with our supporters based on trust and transparency. We strive to create a welcoming and inclusive environment where all fans feel valued and heard.

In terms of our objectives, we have set measurable goals for fan engagement, including improving communications and implementing fan feedback mechanisms to continuously improve the fan experience. We will regularly evaluate our progress, adjust our approach where necessary and report back to the League on our activities and achievements at the end of the season.

I am confident that by working together with you, we can create and implement a fan engagement strategy that not only meets their expectations but exceeds them.

Thank you for your continued support and dedication to our club.

Yours Sincerely,

Huw Jenkins

Chairman

Review of progress against 2024/25 plan

This plan was produced for Newport County AFC's first season under a new ownership model whereby the club was no longer majority community (Supporters Trust) owned.

Throughout the season, the club and its supporters have been adjusting to that scenario and our approach to engagement with supporters has evolved accordingly. The result of this evolution meant that we deviated from our original timescales for engagement, and we recognise there is further work to undertake to make engagement with our supporters more effective.

We held a Fans' Forum in February offering in-person attendance and live streaming to maximise supporter involvement where the entire Board of the club answered questions submitted on the night and in advance. A further event was held in July. Both events were well received by the supporter base, and we plan to continue with this model into the 2025/26 season.

In the 2024/25 plan, the Board of the Supporters' Trust was allocated the role of acting as the Fan Advisory Board. In line with the FEP and commitments made as part of the change of ownership, the Supporters' Trust has been consulted (on behalf of all supporters) on a range of issues including ticket prices, ticketing policies, stadium lease, potential involvement in a new FAW League Cup competition, managerial appointments and training facilities.

In addition to the formal activities outlined in the 2024/25 plan, engagement between the club and its supporters has also taken place in multiple other ways including:

- Regular engagement with the two Supporters' Trust representatives on the Club Board (recognising its status as a 27% shareholder in the club), to ensure that the views and interests of supporters were fully reflected in the running of the club. This occurred at formal meetings of the club Board but also informally including on match days;
- Holding three open training sessions for supporters offering the chance to meet with players, coaching staff, the chairman and the rest of the club Board;
- Using various channels to keep supporters informed of developments throughout the season including media interviews with the chairman, regular newsletters, social media posts and podcasts;
- Club Directors frequently making themselves available on matchdays for discussions with supporters;
- Working collaboratively with the Supporters' Trust on matters such as the FAW League Cup proposal to ensure that supporters' views were reflected in discussions and decision making.

Fan Engagement Commitment

Newport County agrees to comply in full with EFL Regulation 128 and its requirements regarding Supporter Engagement.

Regular, meaningful communication with supporters is crucial, and we will continue to do this through various channels such as official supporter groups meetings, working group sessions, social media posts, newsletters, fan forums and engagements with the Supporters' Trust.

The club also pledges to discuss any heritage items that may be in scope for consultation, such as any matter linked to the club's name, badge, stadium and other areas of our history.

The club will consult with the Supporters' Trust along with a re-constituted, more inclusive Fan Council on strategic and operational decision making matters such as ticket prices and issues, retail products and prices, hospitality pricing, stadium food and beverage offering and prices, matchday experience and stadium facilities.

The Club also pledges to improve our provisions for disabled supporters by working with our re-established DSA and to improve work around Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) to ensure that everyone continues to feel welcome at our club.

We will strengthen links with our local community through the newly appointed Club Ambassador (former player and coach Mark O'Brien). He will act as our Community Liaison Officer and will continue to work closely with our County in the Community Department to increase matchday activities and support and promote their vital work in the community to improve people's lives.

The club is always seeking to improve and provide opportunities for fans to be involved, and we will continue to look for ways to achieve this.

Effective engagement with the fans of Newport County AFC in any number of different ways has enabled us to make huge progress throughout a period of existential change for our club. It is in all our interests that we continue to build on that, and we fully commit to engaging more effectively with our entire fanbase in areas such as season ticket and matchday pricing, digital transformation and communication.

Our Fan Engagement Approach

Newport County's Fan Engagement approach seeks to continually improve dialogue with supporters to ensure that their voices are heard and considered in decision-making processes.

We value the input of our fans and are committed to creating a strong and positive relationship with them. To achieve that goal, the club works to engage supporters in a number of ways.

We will meet with our Supporters Trust and a re-constituted Fan Council regularly throughout the season who will represent and present the views of the fans. The Supporters' Trust and/or the club will publish any relevant updates and outputs from our meetings to ensure all supporters are aware of the activity undertaken.

Our chairman and/or senior department leads will also provide periodic updates for all our fans on the progress made against our Fan Engagement objectives.

We will provide contact details of club officials, Supporters' Trust and Fan Council representatives so that all fans are able to provide the club with feedback on any issues they are experiencing, together with a digital fan survey at least once per season.

We will work with the Supporters' Trust to facilitate and hold at least two fan forums across the season with senior leaders at the club which will be open to all supporters to allow all those interested in attending to listen, contribute and engage with senior club personnel.

If there is demand, we will also endeavour to hold further Q&A sessions and/or fan forums in areas away from Newport city centre in order to engage supporters in their own communities.

All these measures ensure we can listen and learn from all supporters on areas that matter to them.

The structure of our engagement activity is set out in the timeline below. This is subject to change, but fans will be notified of any changes in a comprehensive manner.

All our meetings will be attended by senior staff, and our approach is one of inclusivity and transparency.

Contacts:

Club Fan Engagement Lead: Jonathan Wilsher (j.wilsher@newport-county.co.uk)

Supporters' Trust Fan Engagement Lead: Andrew Bartlett (arnieb79@gmail.com)

Supporter Liaison Officer: Donna Linton (office@newport-county.co.uk)

Club Ambassador / Community Liaison Officer: Mark O'Brien:
(Mark.Obrien@countyinthecommunity.co.uk)

Supporters Trust website: www.ncafctrust.org

General Supporters' Trust Feedback: info@ncafctrust.org

General Club Feedback: office@newport-county.co.uk

www.newport-county.co.uk/club/contact-us

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Fan Engagement Timetable for 2025/26

EVENT	MONTH
Fan Forum 1 (An evening event with senior club staff open to all supporters)	July 2025 (Completed)
Q&A 1 (An evening with assistant manager Wayne Hatswell & Mark O'Brien. Open to all supporters)	
Fan Forum 2	November/December 2025
Fan Forum 3	April/May 2026
Q&A events with football staff, players, senior club staff member etc	Periodically throughout season
Fan Council (FAB) meeting with senior Club officials to discuss issues related to the Club and fan engagement.	Quarterly starting September 2025 Spring meeting to focus on ticketing/stadium issues
Open Training Session	October 2025
Open Training Session	Easter 2026
Fan Survey	May/June 2026

Fan Council

Starting in the 2025/26 season, we will establish a Fan Council to facilitate structured discussions between the club and a wide group of representatives of fans. This follows extensive consultation with the Football Supporters' Association (the representative body of football supporters in England and Wales) to ensure that we allow fans to offer different perspectives, information and input for consideration on operational-based decisions.

The Fan Council will initially be comprised of representatives from established supporter groups. There will be opportunities for individual representatives to be elected to the Council over the course of the season. The timeline for these elections will be communicated via the club's media channels to ensure reach across the supporter base.

The Fan Council will meet with club representatives regularly over the season with a remit to engage the club in respect of our strategic, matchday and operational matters.

Some examples of the topics we intend to cover with the Fan Council include:

- The club's strategic vision and objectives
- Short-, medium- and long-term strategy
- Club business performance updates, priorities and plans
- Ticket strategy and pricing
- Matchday experience and plans
- Club community strategy
- EDI commitments
- The Club plan for broader supporter engagement

The establishment of the Fan Council is supported by the Supporters' Trust to broaden the reach of engagement with fans.

Supporters' Trust Fan Engagement Lead: Andrew Bartlett: arnieb79@gmail.com

Supporters' Trust website: www.ncafctrust.org

Newport County AFC: Our Commitment To Update Fans

Newport County commits to provide regular updates to supporters regarding its fan engagement activity. We want our fans to feel involved in the process, and we remain committed to listening to feedback and views on any aspect of this Plan.

Should there be any changes or updates to the club's Fan Engagement Plan (FEP) we will communicate these clearly and promptly to fans, explaining the reasons behind the changes and how they align with the club's objectives. As previously outlined, transparency and accountability are key, so the Club is open to feedback and engagement from fans on the FEP and its progress.

The club chairman and/or a senior official will provide regular updates on the performance of the FEP, including any successes or challenges faced, and how these are being addressed.

We welcome any feedback across a range of our established engagement areas such as our fan forums or surveys.

Newport County AFC Supporters' Trust Statement

"Newport County AFC Supporters' Trust is fully supportive of the club's Fan Engagement Plan (FEP) for 2025/26.

The FEP formalises the structure of engagement between the club and its fans and is indicative of a positive commitment to that engagement from all concerned. This commitment was shown in 2024/25 with the introduction of our first Fan Forum event with the new majority owner, Huw Jenkins, new manager David Hughes and the two club Directors from the Supporters Trust. This plan builds on that initial success and includes some enhancements to improve that relationship even further.

The club also held a Q&A event in July in a local pub with new assistant manager Wayne Hatswell and new Club Ambassador Mark O'Brien, a former player and coach who will also act as our new Community Liaison Officer.

The Plan allows our fans to continue to have a voice on matters affecting our club by giving opportunities to constructively challenge and seek clarity on issues of importance.

More than almost any other club, our fans are the reason Newport County exists and has continued to exist, and this FEP will help ensure they continue to be at the heart of decisions affecting its long-term future."

To read more about the Supporters' Trust, visit www.ncafctrust.org

Andrew Bartlett - Chairman, Newport County AFC Supporters' Trust

Newport County AFC: How To Get Involved

We'd love to hear back from our supporters on this FEP. Supporters can get involved in Newport County's Fan Engagement Plan by reaching out to our designated contact person or senior staff member responsible for fan engagement.

The club will provide opportunity for feedback, suggestions, and ideas on how together we can improve the fan experience across the multiple areas of engagement detailed across this FEP.

Supporters can also join the Supporters' Trust or participate in Club events and initiatives, to help shape the Fan Engagement Plan and make a positive impact on the overall fan experience.