



CHELTEMHAM TOWN FC

SWDFEF Newsletter August 2016

sharing experiences to improve disabled access and services for disabled fans



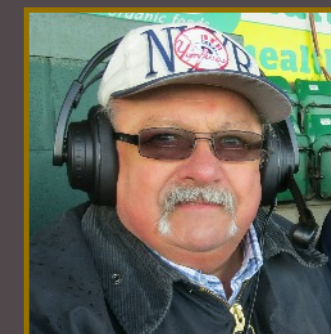
South West Disabled Fans' Experience Forum



Ian James



Nick Saunders



David Munn

Co-Founders: Nick Saunders (Exeter City DSA) & David Munn (Yeovil Town DSA)

SWDFEF, Coral Gables, 18 Lincoln Close, Feniton, Devon, EX14 3EQ
Tel: 01404 850962 Email: d.g.munn@btinternet.com

Editor: David Munn (Yeovil Town DSA) Mobile: 07891986053



"Volunteers are not paid - not because they are worthless, but because they are priceless" - Anon



**Bristol City; Bristol Rovers;
Cardiff City; Cheltenham Town;
Exeter City; Newport County;
Plymouth Argyle; Swansea City;
Swindon Town; Torquay United
& Yeovil Town**

Swansea City DSA

The Liberty Stadium, home of Swansea City FC and Ospreys RFC, has won the Customer Service award at the "Ticketing Technology" awards for an innovative new online ticketing system for disabled supporters.

Ian James SCFC Disability Officer stated "David Enstone, the Liberty Stadium Ticketing Manager demonstrated the system to the Swansea City DSA committee prior to implementation to obtain feedback. Since going live, the system has received a lot of praise and requests for further information from a number of other Premier League clubs. We are lucky to have such an innovative and passionate guy like David working here and the award is well deserved".

Swansea fan and Disabled Supporters Association Chairman Mark Phillips said, "It's fantastic to see the club break new ground. Often a large frustration for many disabled people attending any event is being unable to purchase tickets online, in many cases it even feels like a luxury. It's pleasing that the club is clearly listening to it's disabled supporters and are always looking to improve."

Give us your questions

Plymouth Argyle DSA have suggested that, as an enhancement to our annual Forums, anyone who has a subject that they would welcome input and comments from other clubs, in between Forums, please email them to me at d.g.munn@btinternet.com and I will circulate them. Once ALL replies are received (no more than two weeks after I have raised the question), I will send all input and comments to every club. Thanks.



"He's one of those footballers whose brains are in his head." - Bill Shankly



Yeovil Town DSA

YTFC Open Day DSA Stall

Not a lot has gone on in the close season. Our End of Season meal had to be cancelled at the last moment as the one lift needed to get our members into the Legends Lounge broke down 2 days before the event and could not be repaired for a week. The disabled toilets at Huish Park now have Radar locks on them to help prevent unauthorised use by able bodied supporters. The disabled car parking bays behind the Screwfix stand have now been repainted with the bays behind the Tamburino stand planned to be done next year. YTFC held an Open Day on 30 July after the pre-season Friendly with Swindon Town. Our DSA had a stall alongside the 3G pitch which was manned by committee members. The Glovers Trust (recently set up) is independent from Yeovil Town Football Club and are a democratic, not for profit, one member, one vote organisation committed to giving supporters a strong voice in the decision making process at YTFC and together, strengthening the links between the Club and the Community it serves. They hope at some stage, following their AGM in September to be able to speak to YTFC DSA and together find ways of helping to make the future of YTFC a bright one. We look forward to a beneficial and productive relationship for all parties.



Level Playing Field (LPF)

Level Playing Field's (LPF) Working Together project has gone from strength to strength as we continue to work closely with clubs, disabled supporters associations (DSA's) and key stakeholders to ensure disabled fans representation is placed at the top of the agenda.

We have continued to support the formation of new DSA's and helped establish new regional forums as well as continue to provide support and guidance to existing DSA's in their ongoing works.

We were delighted to be able to play a part in the setup of Crystal Palace DSA which launched in April 2016 – the eleventh DSA to be established during the Working Together project. Their newly elected committee is now working closely with the club to improve the facilities for disabled fans at Selhurst Park, and the DSA is now actively looking to grow their membership and aims to introduce a number of social functions in the near future.

We have also recently been working with Gillingham FC to establish a DSA at the club, with Kieran Reynolds presenting to a group of the clubs disabled fans to promote the concept in July 2016. A steering group has now been established to elect a committee that will now drive the formation of the DSA.

LPF has also supported the organisation of new regional forums which present a great opportunity for clubs and fans to network and share ideas and best practice.

We were delighted to help setup and attend the first Welsh regional forum which was hosted at Newport County's Rodney Parade stadium in April 2016 and featured representatives from LPF, Newport County AFC, Newport County AFC DSA, Cardiff City FC, Wrexham DSA, Swansea City DSA, Airbus UK Broughton and Cardiff Met University. The next Welsh forum is planned for Spring 2017 and will be hosted by Wrexham AFC.

The second South Coast regional forum has also been confirmed to be held at Crawley Town's Checktrade Stadium on 15th September 2016, following on from the highly successful first forum hosted by Portsmouth FC.

There are plans to establish further forums in other regions and encourage you to look out for future communications from LPF for more details.

LPF will also be sending out our annual DSA questionnaire in September this year. As ever, we greatly appreciate all your feedback and encourage you to do so again in order for us to highlight areas where we can develop the Working Together project. This is also a great opportunity to share your achievements with us which we will always be happy to promote through our website, social media and monthly newsletter.

You can keep up to date with all the latest news and developments at LPF by subscribing to our monthly e-newsletter – please send us an email to info@levelplayingfield.org.uk with your name and email address to receive them. You can also follow us on Twitter - @lpftweets and Facebook - www.facebook.com/lpftweets

"Do you ever think, if you hadn't done all that running around playing football, you wouldn't have been so thirsty?" (Caroline Aherne to legendary footballer and long-time alcoholic George Best)



2016 SWDFEF Bristol City Forum Date announcement



The next South West Disabled Fans' Experience Forum

will be held at Bristol City Football Club

on Thursday 13th October 2016 at 1:30pm

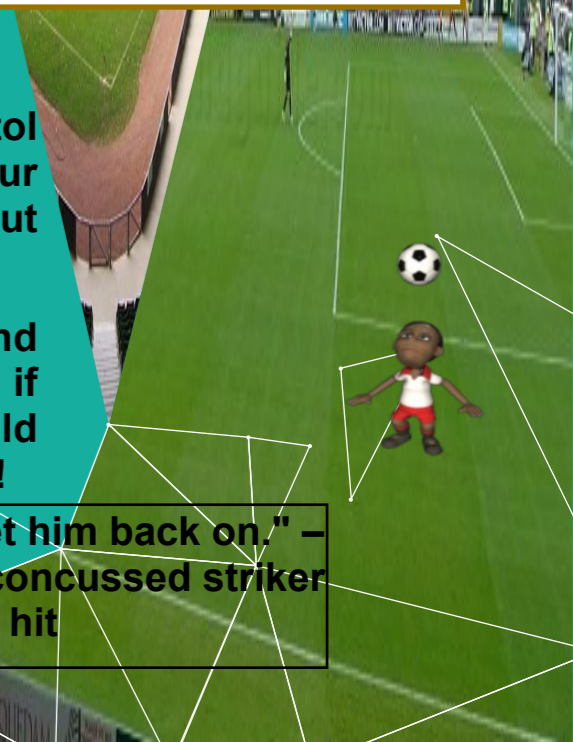
**For further information or application,
please contact: d.g.munn@btinternet.com**

Editor's Comments

I have taken the liberty of publicising the Bristol City Forum again so that you can allocate your attendance in your diary. Invites will be sent out on Thursday 01 September.

Many thanks to you all for your regular and valuable contributions. It would be really nice if ALL Clubs who receive this Newsletter could contribute articles, even if only once in a while!!

"That's great, tell him he's Pele and get him back on." – JOHN LAMBIE responds when told a concussed striker did not know who he was after getting hit



Club legends attend Swansea City DSA end of season event



Swansea legends Lee Trundle and Alan Tate attended the recent Swansea City DSA end of season event held at the club's Liberty Stadium.

The pair took part in a Q&A session alongside young players Stephen Kingsley, Adam King and Jay Fulton, where over 70 members were in attendance.

The Liberty Stadium's Ticket Office Manager, David Enstone, who recently **developed an award winning online ticketing system for disabled fans** also presented to attendees about the software that they will be able to use when booking tickets to see the Swans play in future.

There was also a raffle held as well as an auction, with Lee Trundle taking on the role of auctioneer.

Cath Dyer, Secretary of the DSA said, "The event was very positive, and our whole committee attended on the evening, after a lot of hard work and preparation beforehand. Our committee feel that by supporting our members, we can continue to grow".

"We are grateful to the club for their on-going support - Huw Cooze, supporter director is always on hand and very supportive. Leigh Dineen, Vice chair of the Swans, came along and supported the event, and very kindly gave us refreshments free of charge."

I thought you said he eats, drinks and sleeps football
He does, he just can't play it - Anon



Newport County DSA

After our inaugural year the County DSA is really taking off. We are currently working to form a partnership with the recently formed official Gwent Dragons (rugby) Supporters Association, one of the clubs we share Rodney Parade with, and discussing co-opting one of their CM to join ours to keep communication open between us and thus support each other – hopefully between us we can start bridging the football/rugby divide. We have Quiz Night on August 11th to raise £500 for radar locks for the disabled toilets, the aforementioned Dragons Supporters' are joining us, hopefully along with a couple of teams of first team players and a team from Newport Speedway are also sending a team. At £10 entry per team and a raffle we are sure we will achieve our target.



Our main fundraising campaign for the year will be a "Buy a Brick" campaign to optimistically raise at least half the money for a new covered area for visiting fans in wheelchairs; we can then apply for the other half from FSIF.

On the awareness side we will be working with our Community Team on the "We Wear the Same Shirt" campaign around Mental Health issues (<http://wwtss.timetochangewales.org.uk/home/pledge/>) in addition to teaming up with The Smile Council (raising money for the Academy and childrens charities) to hold a match for awareness of Mental Health; this has exploded on social media since we both announced it yesterday, and hope it will grow and have already discussed a funday for awareness for Yeovil's visit at Easter.

We would like
Loads Money!



'That lad must have been born offside.'-Sir Alex Ferguson on Filippo Inzaghi

Plymouth Argyle DSA (PADSA)

The trip to the playoffs at Wembley seems such a distant memory. Many enjoyed the day and the atmosphere but very disappointed at the result. Many disabled fans managed to go to the game, some had good experiences of Wembley and others not. Again many small issues came up from getting tickets and accessible travel. We have raised these issues and hope that things can be done better next time.

I wonder how many are aware that National Express coaches can now take wheelchairs. The recent advert on the TV saying how great their coaches are all modern etc but no mention we can take wheelchairs!

We have also submitted evidence for the government select committee as asked for by the Culture Minister. I watched with great hope from the evidence given by Level Playing Field.

I attended a training session with Philip Lee from "Soccer Sight" as he has some new volunteer commentators. We were also joined by Sharron and Mandy from Campaign for Disability Awareness who brought along their special glasses that show how various eye conditions affect those who have visual impairments.

I also realised how vital the commentators are to those with visual impairments. The skill in doing a commentary certainly opened my eyes on how much knowledge on the teams, game rules and knowing the left and right and how fast the game goes. I certainly applaud those volunteers who provide this "Soccer Sight" service.

PADSA has had a good meeting with the Community Trust and have plans to work with them next season and we are looking forward to working alongside them. We will also continue to work with the AFT. We are also working along with Ann, Mr Brent's P/A, with a dementia project to help those with this condition to attend matches with the help of a volunteer scheme. Many of our committee are dementia friends.

We were invited to the Community Trust award night for the Disability football teams, held at Home Park. Great to see all the children and adults with their families and carers and coaches rewarded from having a very good season. The community team certainly provides excellent opportunities for all those with disabilities.

Our player of the season went to Carl McHugh who came to the disabled enclosure to receive the PADSA Shield on the last game of the season.

We are sponsoring Number 14 Jake Jarvis and hope all our members will have a good season 2016 - 2017.

When the manager of a non league club started to discuss tactics, some of the team thought he was talking about a new kind of peppermint.

Exeter City DSA and Club news

The Exeter City Disabled Supporters Association 'Most Improved Player of the Year' award was first awarded at the end of the 2007/08 season and past winners have been: George Friend; Dean Moxey; Liam Sercombe; James Dunne; Scot Bennet; Artur Krysiak; Tom Nichols and last year's winner Jordan Moore-Taylor.

Members voting again for the player whom they believe has improved the most over the season and the winner by the biggest margin since the award was started, we have someone who has come on 'leaps and bounds' and has scored some outstanding goals and what can you say about the winning goal vs. Argyle "and no it was not lucky Mr Adams".

2015/16 WINNER of the 'Most Improved Player of the Year' award



Ollie Watkins was presented with his award at the Exeter City 'End of season Ball' on 8th May by ECDSA chairman Nick Saunders and our award sponsor Steve Gazzard.

Exeter City Score Dementia Action Hat-Trick

Three of City's organisations have been accepted as members of the Exeter Dementia Action Alliance and can now proudly use the 'Working to become Dementia Friendly' logo.

The Football Club together with its owners the Supporters Trust and its charity Football in the Community have all successfully submitted action plans to address the issue of dementia. The move followed a workshop held at the club in April when representatives of the three bodies received an awareness raising session provided by the Alliance.



If there's no soccer in heaven I'm not going - Anon

Swansea City DSA Chairman's Report at their recent AGM

My name is Mark Phillips, and it has been my pleasure to be the Swansea City DSA chair over the last season. Throughout the year we have continued to build on the solid foundations within the committee, continuing to strengthen our relationships both within the club, the stadium and the wider footballing community which is to a great credit to the members of the committee and the people in this room this evening.

During the last season we've held many successful events and in January this year we were delighted to announce Lee Trundle as DSA ambassador. Lee has been fantastic with us as a committee, he's a natural in the role is eager to help us grow and raise our profile to support other disabled fans in the Jack army who aren't members.

Committee Structure

The committee currently has 9 members: Myself-Chair, Cath Dyer-Secretary, Andrew Brayley-Treasurer. The committee also has a number of subgroups operating, responsible for organising events, membership and sponsorship which are vital to structure and efficiency of us as a group. The subgroups are responsible for a lot of the work on the ground and behind-the-scenes and without whom a lot of the good work would not happen. We as a committee are also fortunate that we are often joined in meetings by members of the club, Anthony Avo and Disability Officer Ian James. We're also joined by other members of the stadium safeguarding including, ticket office manager David Enstone and Catherine Thomas. This has shown to be vitally important in terms of both input provided and we've been able to feedback and assist the club in improving some of its mechanisms and procedures. We are extremely pleased that the club have looked at the ticketing procedure and provided the opportunity for disabled supporters to purchase tickets online much like other supporters, we congratulate David and his team on their endeavour and their success in winning an award for this facility. We also provided feedback to the Home & Away Visitor Guides YouTube video in November 2015. I personally feel that one of the strengths of Swansea City football club is that they are always looking to improve and in terms of physical access, the club are the best around, receiving positive reviews in both the media and from visiting supporters.

Membership

Membership for the DSA has been a steady progress, as a committee we know we need to improve on the number but we are confident that as we continue to grow as an association and we are able to reach more disabled fans through social media, the website, and links within the club that these numbers will increase over the coming seasons

Events

Over the past year we have had the opportunity to hold some fantastic events:

- September 2015-Evening with Alan Curtis
- December 2015- Swans DSA festive event in Swansea Christmas market
- May 2016- Q & A Event (Panel-Lee Trundle, Jay Fulton, Adam King, Stephen Kingsley and Alan Tate)

These events were a great success. I'd like to thank the club for their support both in publicising and attending the events. A huge thank you to Vice Chairman Leigh Dineen and supporters trust director Huw Cooze who always do whatever they can to help.

These events would not be possible without the work of the Events Committee, please join me in thanking Richard Hazelgrove, Catherine Dyer, Lesley Williams and Cath Williams. They work fantastically well as a sub-committee and they really make these nights to remember for our members, long may they continue over the coming seasons.

Developing links

As a committee we have been able to develop links outside the football club, through the power of social media and membership of the South West Disabled Fans' Experience Forum (SWDFEF). It is fantastic for us as a committee to receive support from other football clubs DSA(s) including Wrexham, Newport and others. It is a positive step for not only assisting a committee but the football community as a whole, to borrow a phrase from the FAW we are certainly "Together Stronger" and will continue to look at ways we can work co-productively in the future.

We've been able to raise the profile through social media, Richard, fantastic work on the newsletters we are currently developing and revamping a whole new website that will engage with our members and hopefully increase the number of Swansea City supporters backing the DSA. Helping us channel issues and creating continued dialogue within the club.

Future Goals

My hope for the DSA in the future is that we continue to build on this momentum and grow as an association, through increased membership and profile with Swansea City fans. Currently we are in the process of developing the new website but also beginning to gain sponsorship from local businesses, sponsorship to strengthen our resources and ability to be self-sustainable to support our members.

I'd like to thank my fellow committee members Andrew Brayley, Richard Hazelgrove, Catherine Dyer, Lesley Williams and Cath Williams, Jan Burgess, Phil Davies and Karen Hopkins.

I'd also like to thank The Club and the Supporters Trust and all who supported the DSA throughout the year.

Most importantly I'd like to thank you the members and hope we can continue to build and it leads to great success on and off the pitch.