

Charlton Athletic Fans' Forum – Thursday, July 14th

Chair

LB – Lucy Bishop – Fan Adviser

Fan representatives

PC – Peter Cockle – Charlton Athletic Official UK and International Fan Group, VE – Victor Eriksson – Swedish Addicks, AH – Adrian Howlett – Charlton Fans In Scotland, CR – Clare Rathbone - North American Charlton Supporters' Club, MS – Marc Stellmacher – International Addicks, MS – Matt Symes – North American Charlton Supporters' Club, JW – Jamie Watkins – Dubai Addicks

Club

TS – Thomas Sandgaard – Owner, CEO, RM – Dr Raelynn Maloney - Ownership Representative, TR – Tom Rubashow – Head of Communications, LS – Lisa Squires – Supporter Liaison

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Raised by</u>
<p>Football staff</p> <p>JW asked for an update on the club's footballing backroom staff following a few departures over the summer. He asked if there are less coaches than last season.</p> <p>TS explained the club bought in Jon De Souza before the summer as the individual coach and he has moved into a more regular coaching role. He said De Souza would also be monitoring the club's loan players to keep that connection with them. He said we also got Scott Marshall in who is used to working with Ben Garner and he is mostly looking at the attacking side. He added that one of the club's academy coaches, Anthony Hayes, has been supporting the men's first team too. He said JW was right that there were definitely changes there but on the training ground it is not like we have been missing out. There have been enough resources, it is just a change in personnel.</p> <p>CR said it seems like there is a sense of excitement amongst the Addicks, a new season, new Manager. There is a sense of excitement, everyone is really looking forward to the new season.</p> <p>JW said the style of football is 100% improved and he thinks it is down to the fans being patient with it. He said it is a completely different style to what we are used to as Charlton fans, the players are there and the Manager is in place. He said it is down to the fans being patient with it, don't get on the players back too early on in the season.</p> <p>AH said the fans in Scotland want to give the new team the chance to prove themselves.</p>	JW
<p>Academy players</p> <p>AH said we haven't seen the name Daniel Kanu mentioned much recently, is there any reason for that?</p> <p>TS said it looks like he is staying with the academy. Of those people in the academy we had trained within the first few weeks it looks primarily Deji Elerewe that is being integrated, Miles Leaburn clearly. Aaron Henry and Charles Clayden are also doing well. He said we are probably going to move more U23 players out on loan compared to the past so they can grow faster but it also allows the U18s more chances to play at a higher level with the U23 team. We are going to make some changes to that.</p>	AH
<p>Player signings</p> <p>JW asked if there were any more permanent signings to join the Addicks.</p> <p>TS said there was one permanent signing in particular the club were working on. Post-meeting note – Jack Payne signed on a permanent deal the following week.</p> <p>VE asked about signings for the women's team. TS said that pretty much all the players on the Women's team were on short-term contracts so they are either being renewed, and few are getting long-term contracts such as two years + an option etc. He said there is a lot of switching up because of the shortness of those contracts, which is still a common thing. He said it is what we call a revolving door with a lot of new faces coming in as we speak. They are getting ready for the season and actually going up to Scotland for pre-season.</p> <p>AH asked whether fans could attend.</p> <p>TR said the club would look into it and update.</p>	JW
<p>Point of contact</p> <p>CR asked who is the new fan liaison officer, who do I contact if I need help with something?</p>	CR

RM said she has been taking care of emails and trying to stay in contact. She said a lot of fans are excited about the start of the season. She said she met Lisa Squires around three or four months ago and she used to be the fan liaison individual at the club for several years. She said they were speaking back then about how we can continue to improve the fan experience. She said more recently when we had a need for that role to be filled she reached out for her and she was more than happy to come on board. She said LS is with the club part-time, she can talk more about herself and her experience and we also have another individual who is going to start on July 27th, mostly on matchdays but also in office work, getting items we need and making sure people get responded to. She said he will be engaged in these types of meetings as well. She said as soon as he starts we will introduce him to the supporters.

LS said that her background with the football club is that she worked here five years ago as club development manager. She was with the club for 17 years, she has a lot of experience and knows a lot about Charlton Athletic, and is also a fan. She encouraged the group to get in touch via the fans@cafc.co.uk email address.

CR asked if LS is the first point of contact rather than LB.

LB said it is worth including both. She said how it has worked previously is anything to do with the nuts and bolts of the club things like ticketing it would be LS that you deal with and she works for the club day to day, whereas LB is not employed by the club. She said what she is working on is more of the long-term project and strategic things. She said she has been doing a lot around 'FillTheValley' and the focus groups there. She said she has had a couple of meetings around the 30th anniversary of Back to The Valley which is later this year.

RM said if there is an issue that you feel the club isn't being responsive then LB as Fan Adviser is the person you want to go to. She will come to us and say this item or process is impacting an international fan base or group/person then we can address the issue internally.

CharltonTV packages

CR said that members of her group were renewing their CharltonTV subscriptions and asked about a clear discount for members of international supporters' groups. She asked what the discount would be and how supporters would be able to redeem it. TR said the club would look into this and confirm shortly. He said the club didn't quite get it right last season but it will be clear and simple this season. RM said she would set up meetings to go through it, so all the supporters can access the discount.

CR

Hotel packages

LB raised a question from Ad Poot of the Dutch Addicks. She asked if there was a possibility for a hotel/ticket package for international supporters. RM said her and LS would be pulling these details together and would also look at a whole package that may include tours etc.

LB

Q&A with TS/international supporters' day

LB raised another question from AP about a Q&A with TS at The Valley – which may work around an international supporters' day. TR said the club are working around dates for an International Supporters' Day and a few had been mentioned. He said the plan this year was to do around a weekend when Charlton Women play at home too, giving supporters the opportunity to watch both teams. TR said the club would also look to make sure any International Supporters' Day catered not just for those travelling to The Valley but also those unable to make the trip from abroad. It was referenced it would be good to get an official blurb on International Supporters' Day to the fan groups, so they could encourage their members to participate. Action: Club to prepare an email once the details are finalised. PC explained his group held a meetup last year with John Robinson. He said this year they are heading to North Carolina in October. Mike Ammann, who was a previous goalkeeper

LB

<p>for Charlton, has a bar in North Carolina. He said they are having a get together there and Mike has invited a number of ex-players that he has played with.</p> <p>It was recommended that a monthly newsletter, which includes information from the supporters' groups on events they have going on, is sent to all international supporters.</p>	
<p>Combined fundraiser</p> <p>CR said it was something that occurred to her as we are developing a community as supporters' clubs as there may be something we want to do together. She said last year the North American Addicks set up a fundraiser for the Upbeats. She asked if there is something we want to do together that combines all the clubs?</p> <p>PC explained his group did two last year, one being a fundraiser for the Upbeats. He said the group worked with the guys at the museum as they have to fund themselves, so they would buy items from the museum and put it on as a monthly auction. At the end of the month we get the payment from the individual who won and then the museum ships it straight to them. He said last year the group raised a good amount of money for the museum.</p>	CR
<p>Club shop and shipping costs</p> <p>CR asked if, with Castore coming in, international supporters would get some sort of break on shipping costs.</p> <p>PC said the first question is whether Castore are going to start shipping internationally as they currently do not.</p> <p>RM said the club have been addressing that on a daily basis with them. She said the club will be able to have conversations with you once we understand what the cost will actually be.</p> <p>She said Castore have assured the club that there will be more available online.</p> <p>JW said while the home kit design is great, Castore seem quite disjointed and, from a club's perspective, you must be quite disappointed with the partnership with them.</p> <p>RM said she did not want to say anything bad about a partnership that we have in place. She said the club have had some challenges but the club are in regular dialogue with Castore to have everything in place.</p> <p>PC said there are a lot of Newcastle fans in Arizona and this is their second season with Castore. He said they said they had the teething problems that we are seeing last year but this season the stuff is already out there and they have a phenomenal away kit. He said all the Newcastle fans here love Castore.</p> <p>RM agreed the brand and quality is outstanding.</p> <p>MS suggested a potential minimum shipping fee if you spend a certain amount.</p>	CR
<p>Fans' Bar</p> <p>MS asked about giving the Fans' Bar a nicer entrance that pays tribute to the club's history.</p> <p>TR referenced the club have redesigned the main reception to pay tribute to the last 30 years.</p> <p>LB said she was at The Valley earlier that day, having not been for a while and the new reception looks really good.</p> <p>MS said he knows a lot of international fans come in and are confused as to where they can sit or what they can do. He said if there is a point for them to go and receive information about the club it would be easier for international fans to find each other within the bar.</p> <p>RM said it is not the most pleasant and inviting reception in the Fans' Bar. She said there are probably a few things we can do to make that entrance more exciting.</p>	MS
<p>Loyalty points</p> <p>CR asked to have some sort of loyalty points connected to the CharltonTV subscription, in the same way as a season ticket would earn those points.</p> <p>TR said this topic has been discussed internally at the club. He said there is definitely some substance to that, especially given the price compared to our season tickets. He said loyalty points are being reviewed at the moment and we can hopefully update that in due course.</p> <p>RM said obviously some of the international supporters can get over here easier than others right now and that loyalty points are really important for buying away tickets at a</p>	CR

priority level, if that is not something you are doing what would be of value to you? We don't want it to be points for the sake of points, we want it to be something that is of value to you.
PC said for international fans the obvious choice would be the club shop.
JW said it would be nice to have crack of getting away tickets for a big game.

CharltonTV

TR said the club's aim is to have international supporters on each matchday, whether it be an interview or pre-recorded message.
Supporters who are interested should email website@cafc.co.uk.
RM said this partly came from feedback from Scott Minto and Steve Brown who wanted to see more international fans on the show.
VE said that the Swedish Addicks are having their annual meeting on September. TR said the club would definitely cover this on CharltonTV.
TR asked the groups to let the club know if they are doing any events as we would love to cover that on social media. He said the club want more fans front and centre on everything.
RM said if the groups are aware of any international youth supporters who would like to be a part of the youth advisory group, we are selecting additional people to join that group.
AH asked about CharltonTV games being available in full on catchup. TR said the club are in a better position on that. He said EFL regulations still restrict them but the full broadcast of games will be available earlier than they were last season.
TR said the club should be allowed to show Saturday 3pm games during the World Cup. TS said that at the annual meeting with the EFL, the club owners and CEOs voted on if we should allow that or not. He said he felt things were moving in the right direction in terms of streaming.

Club