



# Brentford Football Club

# Fan Engagement Plan 2023/24



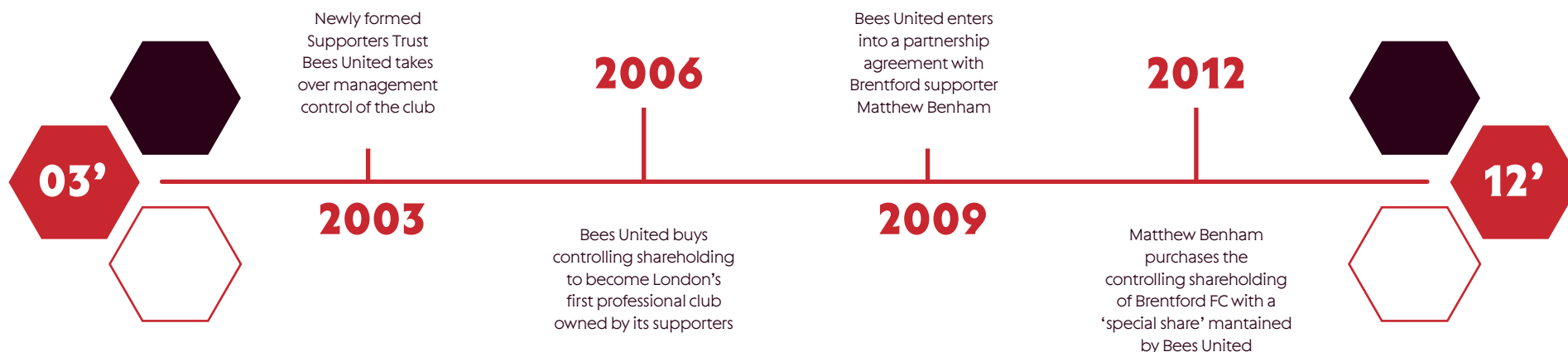
## Brentford's commitment to outstanding fan engagement

Brentford Football Club is committed to delivering outstanding fan engagement – it is one of the club's core business objectives.

Brentford FC fully supports the Premier League's work to introduce the Fan Engagement Standard. To meet the Fan Engagement Standard guidelines, the club has built on its existing fan consultation approach by establishing a Fan Advisory Board and nominating club officials. This document outlines the club's approach to fan engagement in more detail and a Fan Engagement Report will also be shared at the end of the season to report back on its work.

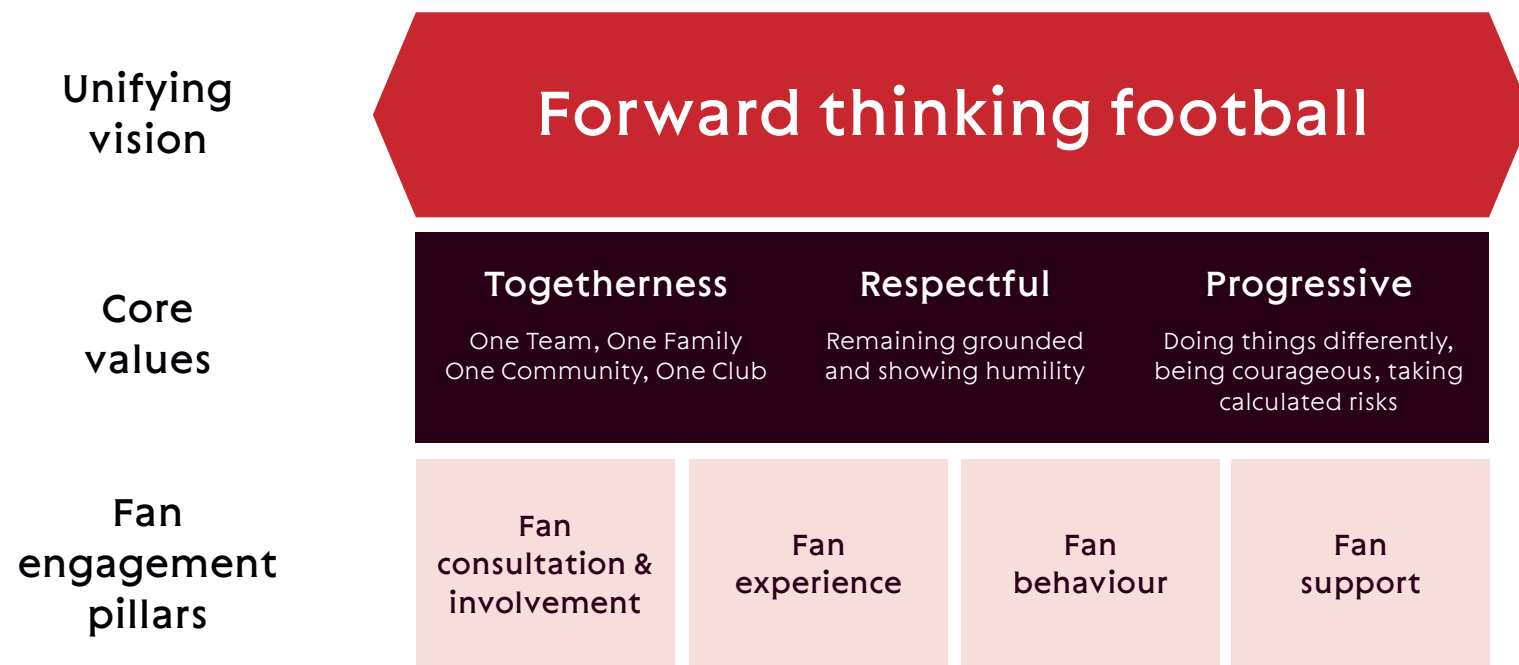
### History of fan engagement at Brentford FC

Brentford FC has a long history of working closely with its fans. Indeed, from 2003 the club's Supporters Trust, Bees United took over management control before buying the controlling shareholding in 2006 to become the first London club to be owned by its supporters. In 2012, Bees United agreed to allow long term Brentford supporter Matthew Benham to purchase the controlling shareholding but, crucially, Bees United maintained a 'special share' in the club giving it the right to veto the sale of the stadium unless certain conditions are met. Bees United also maintained the right to have a fans' representative on the main Brentford FC Board of Directors, currently Stuart Hatcher who is also the Chair of Bees United.



## Brentford's approach to fan engagement

Brentford FC defines “fan engagement” in its widest sense as everything the club does to engage with fans to build allegiance and pride. Brentford's approach to fan engagement covers four key pillars.

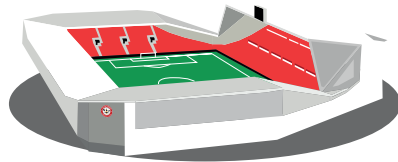


These four fan engagement pillars build on the club's unifying vision of “Forward thinking football” and our core values which are: Togetherness, Respectful and Progressive. The club's commitment to excellent fan engagement is embedded in our values, leadership approach and ways of working at every level. A data-led approach is vital, and that underpins our work to enhance all aspects of fan engagement.

## Club heritage assets

The Gtech Community Stadium is clearly one of the club's main heritage assets and, as noted already, the Bees United 'special share' already safeguards the future of the stadium for our fans.

Further heritage assets include Brentford Football Club's name, main home colours (red, white and black) and its crest.



In the event of any proposed material amendment to any of the above club heritage assets, the club agrees to consult with representatives of the club's Fan Advisory Board (FAB) where the strategic aims will be outlined, together with any relevant supporting research and information, before any final decisions are taken.

## Key roles and responsibilities

The following individuals hold key fan engagement roles at the club:



**Nominated Board Level Official for fan engagement**  
Jon Varney (Chief Executive)



**Fans' representative on the Brentford FC Board**  
Stuart Hatcher (Chair of Bees United)



**Fan & Community Relations Director**  
Sally Stephens



**Fan Engagement Manager**  
Joanne Surgeoner



**Supporter Liaison Officer/Disability Access Officer**  
Sophie McGill



**Fan Relations Executive/Disability Liaison Officer**  
Hayley Carson

From the 2022/23 season, the club also has in place an internal Fan Engagement Working Group with representatives from each area of the club to oversee our work to achieve the Premier League's Fan Engagement Standard and to take forward priority fan engagement projects across the business.

## Fan consultation and involvement

### Fan Advisory Board

Brentford FC's Fan Advisory Board (FAB) is made up of eight representatives from the club's two main official supporters' groups: Brentford Independent Association of Supporters (BIAS) and Bees United, including a co-Chair from each group. The FAB can also invite along a further four people (whether from the fan groups or with other relevant expertise) dependent on the topics on the agenda. The club's Chief Executive (and Nominated Board Level Official) will attend at least one FAB meeting per season.

FAB meetings will also typically be attended by the club's Corporate Affairs Director, Fan & Community Relations Director and Supporter Liaison Officer (SLO) as well as other key club staff personnel as required, dependant on the topics for discussion.

#### Club Attendees \*

##### Chief Executive

Jon Varney

##### Corporate Affairs Director

Greig Mailer

##### Fan & Community Relations Director

Sally Stephens

##### Supporter Liaison Officer

Sophie McGill

\*Plus other representatives as required  
- depending on the agenda

#### Brentford FC Fan Advisory Board \*

##### Co-chair

Stuart Hatcher  
Bees United

##### Co-chair

Adam Hobbs  
BIAS

Chris Tate  
Bees United

Angelo Baso  
BIAS

Don Tanswell  
Bees United

Taylor Dawson  
BIAS

Sharon Wright  
Bees United

Ronald Mansveld  
BIAS

\*Plus other representatives as required  
- depending on the agenda

In line with the Premier League Fan Engagement Standard, the club's FAB will meet a minimum of twice a year, with the aim to meet four times per season. The topics that may be addressed at FAB meetings include:

- The club's strategic vision and objectives
- Club updates, priorities and plans
- Operational matchday and non-matchday issues of concern to supporters (detailed issues will be addressed in any applicable working groups)
- Any proposals relating to significant changes to club heritage items
- The club's communities' strategy
- Equality, diversity and inclusion commitments
- Sustainability

The exact topics to be discussed at each meeting are flexible and will be agreed between the FAB and the club in advance.

The contact details for the FAB will be published on the club's website (once confirmed), together with details on how fans can raise questions or concerns. The SLO will prepare minutes from the meetings which will be shared with FAB members and a summary note from the meeting will be published on the club's website. At the end of the season, the co-Chairs of the FAB will work with the club's chief executive and other key club staff to prepare an assessment report that provides an overview of how the FAB has worked during that season and identify any proposed enhancements for the following season.

## Fan meetings and consultation

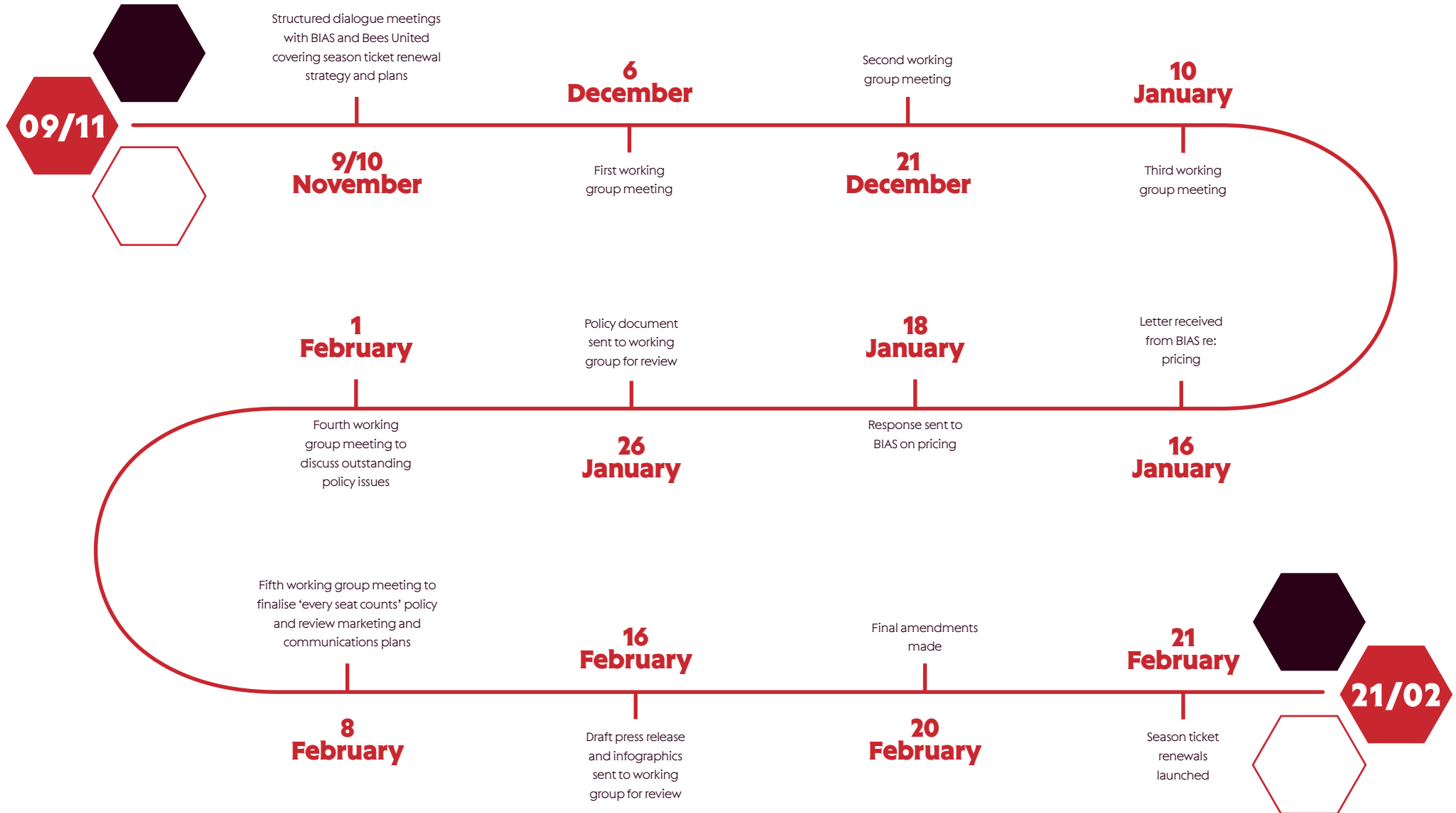
In addition to the FAB, the club also operates or supports a number of different forums to engage with and involve our fans. The table below provides more information on all the different fan consultation forums in operation at the club.

| Fan Consultation Forums | Details                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Fan Advisory Board      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Members are drawn from our two official supporters' groups BIAS and Bees United</li><li>• Meetings are targeted for four times a year (with a minimum of two meetings per year)</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Fan group meetings      | Meetings with formally recognised fan groups including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• BIAS</li><li>• Bees United</li><li>• Brentford Disabled Supporters Association</li><li>• LGBeeTs</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Fans Forum              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• At least one Fans Forum per season which involves senior staff, for example, Chief Executive, Director of Football and Head Coach. These Forum/s will address fans' questions and provide an update on the club's strategy and performance both on and off the field</li><li>• At least two Fans Forums per year focusing on women and girls</li><li>• At least one food and drink Fans Forum per season</li></ul> |
| Working group meetings  | Working group meetings to discuss more detailed matters including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ticketing (policy and ticketing technology)</li><li>• Food and drink</li><li>• Fan atmosphere</li><li>• Fan behaviour</li><li>• Away fan experience</li><li>• Sustainability</li><li>• Hall of Fame</li><li>• Heritage</li></ul>                                                                                                                |



## Season ticket renewal consultation programme

A good example of fan consultation this season in action is the work undertaken by the Ticketing working group on season ticket pricing and supporting the development of a new 'every seat counts' policy to encourage supporters to use their season ticket for every game in a bid to reduce the number of empty seats on matchdays at the Gtech Community Stadium and provide more opportunities for our members to buy tickets for games.



## Fan surveys and feedback

Surveys can provide feedback from a large number of fans in a clear and simple way that helps us to identify what's going well and where improvements are needed. The club undertakes a number of fan surveys throughout the season:

- Mid and end of season fan surveys
- Post-match surveys (for both general admission and premium hospitality areas)
- Pulse point surveys throughout the season to provide a quick measure of the level of satisfaction with responses to queries from key teams across the club, in particular from Retail, Ticketing and Fan & Community Relations teams

The club reviews the data from our mid and end of season surveys under six key headings: strategy & ethos; fans-first approach; ticketing, catering & retail; matchdays & stadium; content & communication; and community support. Results are marked out of 10 and our aim is to get to at least eight out of 10 overall. Tracking this data throughout the season allows us to focus our efforts effectively and make sure that the scores continue to head in the right direction.

### Strategy & Ethos

How would you rate your **overall satisfaction** of being a Brentford FC fan?

To what extent do you agree or disagree that Brentford FC is a **well-run club**?

How **proud** do you feel to be a Brentford FC Fan?

### Fans First Approach

As a Brentford fan, how **valued** do you feel by the club?

To what extent do you agree or disagree that fans are at the **heart of major decisions** that the club makes?

To what extent do you agree or disagree that the club is **welcoming to all fans regardless of their background** (age, gender, race, sexuality, religion, nationality)

### Ticketing, Catering and Retail

How would you rate your overall experience of purchasing **tickets** (home or away) for Brentford games through the club this year?

How would you rate your overall **catering** experience?

**Retail\*** (average of range, value for money, quality, ease of use of online store, service)

### Matchdays and Stadium

How would you rate your **overall matchday experience** this year?

How would you rate the Gtech Community Stadium as a **place to watch football** this season?

### Content and Comms

How would you rate the quality of **content on Brentford FC social media channels**, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok and YouTube?

How would you rate the quality of **content on the Brentford FC website**?

### Community Support

To what extent do you feel that the club performs well in **supporting the local west London community**?



## Fan surveys and feedback

In addition to survey responses and direct feedback from supporters, the club also reviews analytics data from our website and social media channels to help us understand how well we are engaging with our fans.

### Other ways to contact the club

Other ways for fans to contact and engage with the club are provided on the back page of this document.

### This season's key fan consultation and involvement priorities:

- Publish a FAB section on the website, to share news about FAB meetings, terms of reference and ways to contact the FAB.
- Run a full programme of fan consultation forums as outlined above, including to discuss season tickets, memberships and match tickets for the 2024/25 season and set up a new group to assess how we can improve the experience for fans travelling to away games and consider the best way to get feedback from our younger supporters.
- Conduct a full series of post-match, mid and end of season surveys.
- Compile regular fan survey scores, aiming for at least 8 out of 10 overall.



## Fan experience

### Improving the matchday and non-matchday experience for our fans.

Last season, the club was proud to come top for the second year running in the Premier League's Matchday Fan Experience Survey. However, there are still some areas where the club would like to continue to improve, in particular around ticketing, retail and catering.



#### Ticketing

Our Ticketing working group helps the club to identify a running list of issues experienced with our ticketing system and supported the definition of requirements when the club went out to tender for a new ticketing system for the 2023/24 season. In February 2023, the club announced that it had decided to move over to Ticketmaster Sport and has been working hard over recent months on the testing and data migration to support this move for the start of this season. A new direct debit system has also been introduced for this season to help fans spread the cost of season tickets across the season. Following a detailed consultation process with fan groups, the prices for both season tickets and match tickets were frozen for the 2023/24 season and a new 'every seat counts' policy was agreed for season tickets to reduce the number of empty seats at games – season ticket holders who leave their seat empty at a game will receive a game will receive a 'yellow card. More than three yellow cards during the season will mean that they lose the automatic right to renew their seat for the 2024/25 season.

#### Catering

Key areas of focus for the club's catering operation include providing a wider choice of food and drink options particularly for those with complex dietary requirements; ensuring good value for money via early bird and bundle offers; and reducing queues on matchdays.

#### Retail

Our retail operation is continuing to grow, with several new matchday kiosks added to help reduce queues on matchdays. A Mystery Shopper programme has been introduced to give us independent feedback on what it's like to buy club merchandise, whether online or in-store. The Retail team are also focused on improving stock availability, particularly for online purchases.

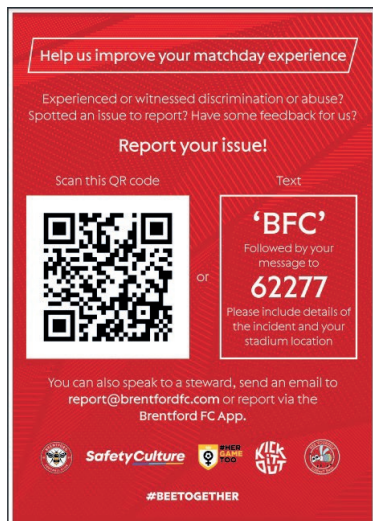
In addition to the key areas identified above, the club will also focus on how to continue to improve the experience for fans in other areas on matchdays in terms of entertainment before, during and after the game. The club is also looking at other ways to welcome new supporters at our fixture for the women's team at the Gtech Community Stadium and access to B team and Academy games. As the club's fanbase grows both domestically and internationally, new ways to share news and features about the club and other ways to engage digitally will also become increasingly important.

## Fan experience

### This season's key fan experience priorities:

- Successful implementation of our new ticketing system, Ticketmaster Sport.
- Transition to a separate online ordering warehouse to ensure accurate stock availability and improve the delivery times.
- Increase the range of merchandise online, especially within womenswear and childrenswear.
- Complete the roll-out of self-service touch screen ordering points for food and drink in key areas to reduce queues.
- Introduce a new Bee Order catering app allowing fans to pre-order food and drink items to meet specific dietary requirements and increase the range of options available for fans around the stadium.
- Increase the marketing and communication around food and drink so that our fans know about new product ranges, technology options and money-saving food deals.
- Provide a fixture at the Gtech Community Stadium for our women's first team and new opportunities to support the B team and Academy.
- Recruit a new Content Strategy Director to oversee new ways to engage with supporters both domestically and overseas, including a new Brentford FC App.





### Creating a safe and respectful environment for fans

The club takes safety and security seriously at the Gtech Community Stadium and wants to ensure that fans, visitors and staff have a safe and enjoyable experience.

The overwhelming perception from our fans about the experience at the stadium is a positive one. However, we know that there are occasions when language or behaviour is unacceptable and impacts on the enjoyment of other supporters. As part of the club's ongoing efforts to eliminate discrimination and abuse, there are clear messages around the stadium reminding fans that this won't be tolerated and how they can report any incidents they encounter. The club has a dedicated investigations team in place to review any incidents and take action where necessary in a fair and consistent manner and a new Acceptable Behaviour Policy is being developed in consultation with fan groups.

### Ensuring tickets go to Brentford fans

It is a source of ongoing frustration for Brentford fans when tickets find their way into the hands of ticket touts, especially away supporters in home areas. This is against our ground regulations and puts the safety of our supporters at risk as well as preventing genuine Bees fans from being able to support the team. The club has set up a dedicated team within the Box Office to investigate any reports of ticket touts and the sale of tickets on third party sites and has taken action to sanction those that are knowingly passing on their tickets to third party ticketing sites and to away fans. During the 2022/23 season, more than 200 memberships were revoked as a result of this action and tickets bought on third party ticketing websites are prevented from entry to the Gtech Community Stadium.

### This season's key fan behaviour priorities:

- Review the different methods of reporting incidents and whether any improvements can be made for supporters.
- Publish an Acceptable Behaviour Policy (following consultation with fan groups) to make it really clear what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour and how any breaches of this policy will be managed.
- Ensure regular publication of information around the number of interventions made by the club relating to poor behaviour, together with regular communication about unacceptable behaviour/language and how to report issues.

## Fan support

### Supporting our fans

The club encourages all staff to prioritise supporting our fans and to go the extra mile to help create a special welcome and lasting positive memories both on matchdays and non-matchdays. The Fan Support Team on matchdays are there to assist all supporters and are available to provide additional assistance, such as wheelchair pick-ups for fans with mobility issues. Our dedicated Fan & Community Relations team is also in place at the club to respond to fan queries and deliver special support for our fans when they may be going through a difficult time in their lives, such as through a period of illness or personal loss. This team also supports the Directors of the club to call our season ticket holders on special birthdays – something that was started during COVID, but have continued to do as it's been valued by our fans.

The club's Accessibility team is on hand to help any supporters with disabilities or any other specific needs on a matchday and works closely with the Brentford Disabled Supporters Association to prioritise and progress any improvements for disabled fans.

### Supporter Charter

The club's Supporter Charter sets out commitments to fans and is published on our website. The Supporter Charter is reviewed and agreed on an annual basis with the Fan Advisory Board.

### Complaints process

The club's complaints process is outlined in full in the Supporter Charter which is published on our website. Any complaints should be sent in the first instance to our Fan & Community Relations team via email to [supporterservices@brentfordfc.com](mailto:supporterservices@brentfordfc.com), and we aim to respond within seven working days. If supporters are not satisfied with the outcome, they can address any further complaints to the club's Fan & Community Relations Director. Beyond that, the club also has a Club Adjudicator in place who deals with any issues not satisfied at this stage (and also manages any appeals relating to club sanctions). As for all clubs in the Premier League, the Independent Football Ombudsman provides the final stage for dealing with complaints.

### Fan groups

Details of Brentford's main fan groups are listed on our website, including the two official fan groups, BIAS and Bees United, who are involved in the club's Fan Advisory Board and other groups including the Brentford Disabled Supporters Association, LGBees, the Brentford Lifeline Society and West Country Bees. The club is also developing a network of overseas fan groups and those details will be shared on our website later this season.




### This season's key fan support priorities:

- Publish a revised Supporter Charter for the 2023/24 season, following consultation with fan groups.
- Implement new options for disabled fans to allow them to purchase personal assistant tickets online.
- Introduce the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Scheme and conduct disability awareness training workshops in conjunction with Level Playing Field for key matchday staff.
- Extend the role of the Fan Support Team by involving them in gathering fan feedback on matchdays.

## Fan support

### How to contact the club

The club has a number of other dedicated feedback mechanisms for supporters.

- Dedicated email addresses for particular queries include:
  - [Tickets@brentfordfc.com](mailto:Tickets@brentfordfc.com) for any issues relating to tickets
  - [Enquiries@brentfordfc.com](mailto:Enquiries@brentfordfc.com) for general information and queries and requests for matchday messages
  - [Shop@brentfordfc.com](mailto:Shop@brentfordfc.com) for any merchandise queries
  - [Supporterservices@brentfordfc.com](mailto:Supporterservices@brentfordfc.com) for any requests for special assistance or support
  - [Accessibility@brentfordfc.com](mailto:Accessibility@brentfordfc.com) for any specific accessibility queries
- For any instances of unacceptable behaviour, fans have a number of options to report this to the club: via a steward on matchdays; reporting via the Brentford app, by texting 'BFC' followed by a message to **62277**; by scanning the QR codes around the stadium or in the matchday programme; or by emailing the club at [report@brentfordfc.com](mailto:report@brentfordfc.com)
- Direct dial numbers to key teams across the business are also provided on the club's website
- The club's official social media platforms:  Brentfordfootballclub1889  BrentfordFC  BrentfordFC

