

**WE ARE  
IMPS**



# **LINCOLN CITY FOOTBALL CLUB**

## **FAN ENGAGEMENT PLAN**

**2024/25 SEASON**





# CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION .....	.2
OUR 7 FAN LED REVIEW COMMITMENTS .....	.3
OUR CULTURE .....	.4
2023/24 FE HIGHLIGHTS .....	.5
LCFC FE STRATEGY 2024/25 .....	.6
HOW WE ENGAGE OUR FANS .....	.7
HOW WE ENGAGE VISITING FANS .....	.8
HOW YOU CAN MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD .....	.9
THE FAN ADVISORY BOARD (FAB) .....	.10
RED IMPS COMMUNITY TRUST (RICT) .....	.11
2024/25 FE KEY ACTIVITIES .....	.12
THE FAN'S SHARE & HERITAGE ITEMS .....	.13



# INTRODUCTION



## DAVID LOWES

**NOMINATED BOARD LEVEL OFFICIAL FOR FAN ENGAGEMENT**

**"AS A LIFELONG IMPS FAN I AM PROUD TO BE SERVING ON THE BOARD OF THE CLUB I LOVE.**

I and my board colleagues fully appreciate the importance of representing the interests of fans especially in the context of the governance and sustainability challenges facing football. That's why we took a proactive approach to the fan led review, forming a working group in Sept 2022 with representatives of fans groups to develop our understanding of and response to the reform of football.

On the following page are the commitments the Board made coming out of that work which go above and beyond the mandatory requirements of the football governance bill. As the current custodians of this wonderful football club we will always seek to ensure our supporters are represented in both the short and long-term plans for the club. There is no greater example of this than the creation of the fans share.

As the board member responsible for fan engagement my role is to oversee the club's fan engagement activities, working closely with CEO Liam Scully and head of supporter services, Rob Noble. My aim is to ensure we continue to have meaningful dialogue with you, our supporters on a consistent and sustained basis, and support Liam and the team to deliver this Board approved annual plan designed to strengthen your feeling of connection with the club.

External recognition and your feedback tells us our fan engagement is strong, but we don't take that for granted and will remain driven to deliver continuous improvement.

The key pillars of our plan are focused on providing transparency through the quality of our communication, making memories through great experiences and living our values through actions.

Simply put we want everyone to feel they belong to a club to be proud of.

Up The Imps!"

DAVID LOWES



# OUR 7 FAN LED REVIEW COMMITMENTS



- |  |             |
|--|-------------|
|  | COMPLETE    |
|  | IN PROGRESS |
|  | NOT DONE    |
1. WE WILL BE READY FOR INDEPENDENT REGULATION.
  2. WE WILL WORK TO ENSURE EXTENSIVE REACH AND REPRESENTATION OF OUR FANBASE.
  3. WE WILL CREATE A GOLDEN SHARE KNOWN AS “THE FANS’ SHARE”.
  4. WE WILL HAVE A NOMINATED BOARD LEVEL OFFICIAL FOR FAN ENGAGEMENT.
  5. WE WILL MAINTAIN A STRONG RELATIONSHIP WITH THE RED IMPS COMMUNITY TRUST AS HOLDERS OF “THE FANS’ SHARE”
  6. WE WILL MAINTAIN A STRONG PARTNERSHIP WITH THE FAN ADVISORY BOARD IN REPRESENTING FAN INTERESTS.
  7. WE WILL BE GUIDED BY A FAN ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY EXECUTED THROUGH A BOARD APPROVED ANNUAL FAN ENGAGEMENT PLAN.





# OUR CULTURE



## LIAM SCULLY

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

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**“Putting supporters at the centre of everything we do is one of the golden threads which runs through Lincoln City.**

To say we are only temporary custodians of the club is a well-used cliché, but we are passionate in ensuring safeguards are put in place to protect the club no matter who is in charge. This is why I was so pleased to see the introduction of a Fans’ Share, which was approved at our AGM early in 2024 following a lengthy consultation process with all our organised supporter groups.

This was the culmination of our working group spending many months understanding the implications of the Fan Led Review and how best to ensure we used its recommendations to best suit Lincoln City FC. We’re incredibly proud to be only the second of the current EFL clubs to have implemented this. This goes beyond the FLR requirements and as part of this our director David Lowes was given the specialist portfolio of fan engagement, to ensure supporter considerations are heard at every level of the club.

I believe this success is built upon a cultural embedding of fan engagement at all levels of the club - everyone connected to Lincoln City routinely considers where they can help drive us forward in this area.

We also recently opened the Co-operative Community Hub, which provides a new home for Lincoln City Foundation. Based at the LNER Stadium, the Foundation had outgrown the space available to them at the stadium and this new facility really gives them the resources to meet the needs of the community over the next few years - including helping drive our interaction with supporters.”

LIAM SCULLY



# 2023/24 FE HIGHLIGHTS

We have worked in consultation with supporters' clubs, representative groups and our wider fanbase to deliver meaningful fan engagement activities.



## July

- Imps 4 All ticket scheme launched
- Section of safe standing opened following a lengthy consultation process with supporters



## August

- Board level official for fan engagement appointed
- Annual Fan Engagement plan presented and signed off by the board for 23/24 season
- Open training session and meet the players event
- New matchday activity including Poachers Pundits
- Board publish their seven commitments in relation to the Fan Led Review



## October

- Attendance 4 Attendance scheme launched into schools

## November

- Fireworks night and player signing event



## December

- Fan vote on the change of the club badge
- Players hospital visit
- Minutes applause for supporters and former players who passed away in the last 12 months

## January

- Fans' Share formally proposed as part of the Fan Led Review process



## February

- Fans' Share Issued at club AGM.
- Fans Forum with exclusive insight from Jez George and Michael Skubala
- Club nominated for the 2024 Lincolnshire Community Business of the Year Award.



## March

- FAB take up the process to induct former players and managers into the Hall of Fame
- City players help clean up Sincil Bank
- Annual Fan Survey sent to supporters

## April

- City partner with Climate Captains as part of the club's ongoing sustainability drive.
- Player visits to Foundation Holiday Club



## May

- EFL Family Excellence Gold awarded to the club
- Community World Cup held at the LNER Stadium

## June

- Co-op Community Hub opens



### Director Responsible for Fan Engagement

In the summer of 2023 the club's board approved the role of a fan engagement director (FED), with David Lowes taking on the role.

The key responsibilities of the FED are steering the Fan-Led Review working group from recommendation through to implementation, liaising with the Red Imps Community Trust to align strategy and plans as holders of the golden share, encouraging a culture of fan engagement throughout the club and ensuring true representation of our fanbase in engagement

The FED presents the annual fan engagement to the club's board, supporting a communication approach that is transparent, informative, accurate and timely while seeking to learn and to develop our approach to fan engagement.

### Fans' Share

City became only the third club in England to introduce a golden share - giving supporters an opportunity to have their say on significant decisions. Shareholders of the club voted to create the share, to be called "the fans' share" at the AGM held at the LNER Stadium in February.

This will give the Red Imps Community Trust (RICT) ownership of a share on behalf of fans which allows them to decide on key matters such as a stadium move, the club's name, badge, team colours or name of the Stacey West Stand. Proposed changes to any of these would be put to a vote, overseen by the RICT, before they could be implemented.

### EFL Family Excellence Gold Award

A glowing Family Excellence report showed the effectiveness of the club's matchday approach to engagement sees the club top the charts for League One and third in the entire EFL. City's use of social media on matchdays - using a number of networked accounts - was named as the best in the EFL.

### New Facilities

The Co-op Community Hub is opened, providing a new home for the club's Foundation to provide community work on matchdays and non-matchdays.



# LCFC FAN ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY 2024/25



<b>VISION</b>	<b>A CLUB TO BE PROUD OF</b>		
<b>FAN ENGAGEMENT MISSION</b>	TO RETAIN AND GROW OUR FANBASE BY FORGING A STRONG EMOTIONAL CONNECTION THROUGH OUR VALUES, QUALITY OF COMMUNICATION AND BY DELIVERING POSITIVE EXPERIENCES		
<b>KEY CONSULTATION BODIES</b>	<b>RED IMPS COMMUNITY TRUST</b>	<b>FAN ADVISORY BOARD</b>	<b>FAN LED REVIEW WORKING GROUP</b>
<b>STRATEGIC DELIVERABLES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ESTABLISH A GOLDEN SHARE</li> <li>INCREASE RELEVANCE AMONGST MEMBERS</li> <li>DELIVER FANS: CLUB: COMMUNITY: STRATEGY</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RELAUNCH</li> <li>DEVELOP GOVERNANCE, REPRESENTATION &amp; COMMUNICATION</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNDERSTANDING &amp; STEERING</li> <li>MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS</li> <li>DELIVER IMPLEMENTATION PLAN</li> </ul>

## ACTIVITY PILLARS

	<b>TRANSPARENCY THROUGH COMMUNICATION</b>	<b>MAKING MEMORIES THROUGH GREAT EXPERIENCES</b>	<b>LIVING OUR VALUES THROUGH ACTIONS</b>
<b>EXAMPLES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>REFRESHED FANS FORUM</li> <li>CHANGE OF CLUB CREST FAN VOTE</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MATCHDAY MOMENTS OF MAGIC</li> <li>FAMILY EXCELLENCE GOLD AWARD</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>THE FANS' SHARE</li> <li>NEW CO-OP COMMUNITY HUB</li> </ul>





# HOW WE ENGAGE OUR FANS



There are a number of mechanisms that we update supporters through including:

- Two elected supporter Directors on the Board
- A Fan Advisory Board (FAB) who are consulted and engaged on key operational topics and long-term, strategic plans that impact supporters.
- Open Fans Forums at least 2x times per year, attended by Club Directors, CEO and senior staff
- Regular engagement with supporters clubs, including the Red Imps Community Trust, Lincoln City Foundation, John O'Gaunt's Club, 617 Squadron, the Disabled Supporters Association and other official supporters' club's.
- LCFC Annual Fan Survey, the EFL fan survey and our own ED&I survey as well as specific supporter panel survey's on key topics.

The best place for supporters to hear the latest news is the club website: [www.weareimps.com](http://www.weareimps.com) and across the club's social media channels.

Visit our dedicated page **HERE**:

<https://www.weareimps.com/fans/fan-engagement>





# HOW WE ENGAGE VISITING FANS



We recognise fans of all clubs. Each year we host around 20,000 away fans and it's important to us we engage with them positively providing an enjoyable, friendly and and safe experience. Each year we review our away fans provision and look to make improvements.

Here are some of our initiatives:

- Investment in brand new toilet facilities.
- New and improved catering facilities with significant expansion of the concourse area for away supporters.
- Dedicated away SLO with support from the broader SLO team.
- Stewards training.
- Contact and feedback opportunities via email: [feedback@theredimps.com](mailto:feedback@theredimps.com)

The best place for away supporters to get information regarding their visit is the club website: [www.weareimps.com](http://www.weareimps.com) where we have an away fans guide detailing all the information required ahead of the visit.

Our SLO also welcome's questions in advance of fixtures to help plan your day at the LNER Stadium: [slo@theredimps.com](mailto:slo@theredimps.com)





# HOW YOU CAN MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD



We welcome contact from supporters on a regular basis. To help ensure your comments reach the right place, please use the information below to contact the relevant people.

## Direct Club Feedback

E-Mail: [feedback@theredimps.com](mailto:feedback@theredimps.com)  
Telephone: **01522 880011** (10am – 5pm Mon to Fri)  
WhatsApp: **01522 563794**  
X (Twitter): [@LincolnCity\\_FC](https://twitter.com/LincolnCity_FC)

Matchday SLO:

[slo@theredimps.com](mailto:slo@theredimps.com)

## External Supporter Groups

Fan Advisory Board:

[fabchair@theredimps.com](mailto:fabchair@theredimps.com)

Red Imps Community Trust:

<https://www.redimpstrust.co.uk/contact/>





# THE FAN ADVISORY BOARD (FAB)



Since being created in 2018 the Fan Advisory Board (formerly the Supporters Board) has deservedly provided the fans of Lincoln City Football Club with a voice on key non-football matters including finance and strategy which is listened to by the club's hierarchy who regularly use our input and views to steer their decision making.

## FAB Input on Key Topics

- The Club's strategic vision and objectives;
- Enhancing the fan experience;
- Stadium development projects;
- Sustainability, corporate and social responsibility initiatives;
- Improving fan products and services;
- Football governance/heritage assets
- Equality, diversity and inclusion;
- Providing support and resources to representative groups and the wider fanbase;
- Any other club relevant topics arising from club surveys, fan panels and working groups, which would allow for the club to keep abreast of fan-facing issues and topics;
- Operational matchday issues of concern to supporters

## Key items discussed with the club's hierarchy during the last twelve months have included:

- Club investment
- New EFL TV deal & streaming
- Season membership & matchday pricing
- Away ticketing & travel pricing
- Club Branding & change of club crest
- Financial accounts
- EFL postponements policy
- Fixture rescheduling
- Catering provision
- Online sales
- FA Cup changes
- Matchday programme
- Fans Forum format

Our Fan Advisory Board consists of a diverse group of independent supporters representing our club's fanbase who meet 6 times per year with the club's CEO, Head of Supporter Services and Board Director responsible for Fan engagement.

### 2024/25 Members

**Tony Smith (Chair)**  
**Charlie Beeston**  
**Chris Lamming**  
**Jackie Atkins**  
**Jon Clack**  
**Jonathan Battersby**  
**Marcus Burton**  
**Roy Thomson**  
**Samantha Kendall**  
**Toby Freestone**

### **The FAB Schedule 24/25**

1. August 24th 2024
2. October 26th 2024
3. January 4th 2025
4. February 22nd 2025
5. April 12th 2025
6. June TBC 2025

The FAB has a section of the club website to explain and promote its work including an introduction to each member, the constitution and a memorandum of understanding for the FAB and copies of agreed minutes from all meetings is available at: [www.weareimps.com/fans/fan-advisory-board](http://www.weareimps.com/fans/fan-advisory-board)

Please get in touch with us by emailing [fabchair@theredimps.com](mailto:fabchair@theredimps.com) if you would like us to discuss any off-field matter with the club.

**Tony Smith**  
Chair of the Fan Advisory Board





# RED IMPS COMMUNITY TRUST (RICT)



**The Red Imps Community Trust** was formed in 2001 at a time when the very existence of the club was at risk. Today the Trust has more than 6,000 members, a strong board and governance structure, two fan elected club Directors and is the holder of the Fans' Share. It meets regularly with CEO Liam Scully, Rob Noble, Head of Supporter Services and David Lowes, Club Director.

**The club support the Trust's mission and actively help them deliver their fan engagement activities.**

## **RICT MISSION:**

**'SUPPORTING OUR FANS OUR CLUB OUR COMMUNITY'**

## **FAN ENGAGEMENT IS...**

**'Growing the Emotional Attachment and Feelings of Belonging Our Fans Have With Our Club'**

'Fan engagement has been a golden thread running through the aims and actions of the Red Imps Community Trust for over twenty years. Our strap line – 'Supporting Our Fans, Our Club, Our Community' - in seven short words defines simply but effectively what we are all about. Fan Engagement where we seek to grow the emotional attachment and feeling of belonging our fans have with our club is a fundamental part of that. With two elected Supporter Directors on the Lincoln City board of directors, our continual Trust/Club dialogue, the holding of a Fans' Share relating to significant future club proposals, and our face-to-face actions with our supporters on matchdays and beyond, we feel we contribute well in conjunction with the club in how Lincoln City FC and its supporters have a positive and enjoyable relationship.

### **Rob Bradley**

Chair of the Red Imps Community Trust.



# 2024/25 FE KEY ACTIVITIES



## TRANSPARENCY THROUGH COMMUNICATION

### CONTINUED FROM 2023/24

Annual Fan Engagement plan presented and signed off by the board for 24/25 season.

Fans Forum held with directors and senior staff.

Fans Forum with exclusive insight from Jez George and Michael Skubala.

Annual Fan Survey sent to supporters.

You Said, We Did programme.

Board, FAB Minutes Sharing.

Behind-the-Scenes Content.

Disabled Supporters Association open forum held at the club.

### NEW FOR 2024/25

Relaunched website.

Imps+ App.

Regular Q&A Sessions with Club Executives across varying formats and platforms.

Refreshed Customer Charter.

Fan Engagement included in Club Annual Report.

Broader Behind-the-Scenes Content.

Refreshed Annual Survey and results communicated.

## MAKING MEMORIES THROUGH GREAT EXPERIENCES

### CONTINUED FROM 2023/24

EFL Family Excellence Gold awarded to the club and ranked 1st in League One.

Open training session and meet the players event.

Players' hospital visit.

Fireworks night and player signing event.

### NEW FOR 2024/25

Rewards 4 Imps expanded.

Club heritage projects including Hall of Fame.

Matchday moments of magic.

Junior Imps small actions big impact.

Local suppliers showcased.

Increased Meet-and-Greet Events.

## LIVING OUR VALUES THROUGH ACTIONS

### CONTINUED FROM 2023/24

Imps 4 All ticket scheme.

Attendance 4 Attendance scheme launched into schools.

Disabled Supporters Association open forum held at the club.

Minutes applause for supporters and former players who passed away in the last 12 months.

### NEW FOR 2024/25

Add local organisations to Imps 4 All ticket scheme.

New Co-op Community Hub fan interactions.

Grow Fan Shareholder base.

Launch campaigns and workshops promoting diversity and inclusion.

Environmental Sustainability Initiatives.



# THE FANS' SHARE & HERITAGE ITEMS



The benefits of the Fans' Share will be that:

- A new legal right will be gained (strengthening a previous “unwritten understanding”), so that fans can democratically elect two people to represent them on the club’s Board of Directors
- A new permanent legal right will be gained for any proposal listed below to be vetoed, if a veto is desired by the majority of fans in a democratic vote:



**CHANGING THE  
CLUB CREST**



**CHANGING THE  
HOME SHIRT COLOURS**



**CHANGING THE TEAM  
PLAYING NAME**



**CHANGING THE NAME OF THE  
STACEY WEST STAND**



**STADIUM RELOCATION  
OUTSIDE THE LINCOLN BYPASS**



**DEALINGS THAT ENABLE THE STADIUM TO BE  
OWNED BY SOMEONE OTHER THAN THE CLUB**





# LINCOLN CITY FOOTBALL CLUB

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## FAN ENGAGEMENT PLAN

2024/25 SEASON

  
**WE ARE  
IMPS**