

CARLISLE UNITED FAN ENGAGEMENT PLAN 24/25



FOREWORD



Welcome to Our Fan Engagement Plan

Welcome to the **Carlisle United** Fan Engagement Plan.

As the Chairman of our Club, I am proud to present our vision, aims, values, and objectives for fan engagement. At **Carlisle United**, we believe that our fans are at the heart of everything we do and their unwavering support is what drives us to succeed both on and off the pitch.

The Club's overall objective is "Working together, building a sustainable and successful club that we can take pride in." Working together means the club, the fans and our community in Carlisle and surrounding area coming closer, collaborating and engaging together.

Fan engagement is central to achieving this objective.

- Working together with our fans makes the club better - it's that simple. It's the right thing to do.
- Working together in this way gives those running our club better insight and a closer connection with supporters.
- It gives us an opportunity to get alternative perspective and ideas when making judgements and decisions – from operational matters to discussions held at the boardroom table.

Our overarching vision is 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 and provide them with unique and memorable experiences that go beyond matchdays.

Our values of integrity, passion, and respect 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.

To ensure clubs like Carlisle United continue to make a valuable contribution to our supporters and the community, the game's fractured governance model and the inequitable distribution of finances need to be urgently addressed. We are delighted to see all the main political parties commit to introduce an independent football regulator in their manifestos followed by a new Football Governance Bill being included in the recent 2024 King's Speech. We believe that this legislation is needed to put the game on a more sustainable financial footing, and we look forward to continuing working with you to ensure that when new legislation is introduced, it delivers for clubs and communities up and down the country.

In terms of our objectives, we have set measurable goals for fan engagement, including:

- Top quartile in Fan Engagement Index benchmarking.
- Top quartile in the EFL in the Fair Game Index.
- Implementing fan feedback mechanisms to continuously improve the fan experience.
- Annual questionnaires on equality, inclusion and diversity.
- Active participation in EFL fan engagement surveys.
- Matchday feedback surveys (by both Club and CUOSC – in person and online).
- Engaging with fans in the preparation of our Club Charter.

We will regularly evaluate our progress and report back to the fans and our wider community on our activities and achievements at the end of the season.

I am confident that by working together with our fans, we can continue to build our already very strong fan engagement activities that not only meets their expectations but exceeds them. Thank you for your continued support and dedication to our Club.

Yours sincerely,

Tom Piatak

OUR COMMITMENT



Carlisle United agrees to comply in full with EFL Regulation 128 and its requirements regarding Fan Engagement.

Regular meaningful communication with supporters is important, and we will continue to do this through various channels such as the Carlisle United Supporters Groups (“CUSG”), Carlisle United Official Supporters Club (“CUOSC”), social media, newsletters, and fan forums.

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.

Castle Sports Group (“CSG”), C.U.F.C. Holdings (“Holdings”), Carlisle United Association Football Club (1921) Limited (“1921”) and Carlisle United Official Supporters Club (“CUOSC”) have agreed that unanimous approval of Holdings share holders is required to change the following:

- Make any change to name of any of the Club’s playing teams, including any change of:
- The club’s men’s senior first XI name from “Carlisle United Football Club”.
- Make any change to the Club Crest.
- Make any material change to the home playing colours of the Club’s football teams.
- Move the location of the stadium to a location more than 2 miles from the current location of the stadium.

Thus, giving CUOSC “golden share” rights on these referred matters.

Save where such name change is part of a bona fide commercial agreement with a third party on arms’ length terms and approved by the club, change the name the Stadium from “Brunton Park”.

The club is always seeking to improve and provide opportunities for fans to be involved, and over recent seasons we have continued to enhance the way we set out to achieve this.

At Carlisle United we have already achieved so much as a result of consulting and engaging our fanbase, such as being ranked:

- highly in the Independent Fan Engagement Index:
<https://www.carlisleunited.co.uk/news/2023/march/Club-united-score-high-marks-for-fan-engagement>
- Second in the Fair Game Index of Clubs:
<https://www.carlisleunited.co.uk/news/2023/july/fair-game-index-carlisle-rank-second-in-the-country>

We are committed to:

- Listening to fan feedback on ticketing issues.
- Recognising and celebrating the important role that fans play in the success of the club.
- Encouraging inclusivity and diversity within the fan base and actively seeking to engage with all supporters, regardless of background.
- Resolving any supporter grievances or concerns in a timely and respectful manner.
- Continuously seeking ways to improve supporter engagement and implementing feedback from fans to enhance the fan experience.



FAN ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

Our Engagement Structure, Keeping Our Supporters Engaged

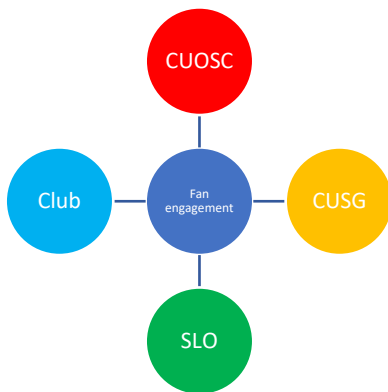
Carlisle United's Fan Engagement approach seeks to continually improve dialogue with supporters and ensure that their voices are heard and considered in decision-making processes. We value the input of our fans and are committed to creating a strong and positive relationship with them.

To achieve that goal, the Club works to engage supporters in a number of ways.





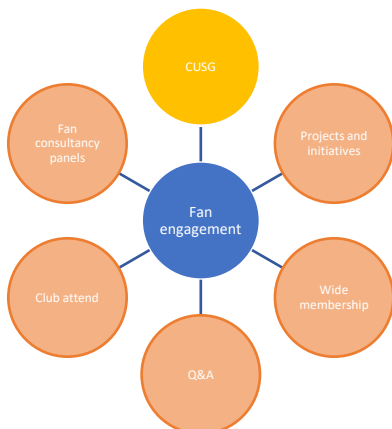
We meet with our supporter groups (CUSG) regularly throughout the season, hold fan forums, focus sessions and working group meetings. All these measures ensure we can listen and learn from supporters on what areas matter to them.



The structure of our engagement activity is set out in the timeline below (page 6).

Carlisle United Supporters' Groups

In the 2016/17 season, the Club developed The Carlisle United Supporters' Groups 'CUSG'. It involves Directors and Club staff meeting with representatives of supporter groups around every 6 weeks to feedback and discuss important issues. As part of this the Club sends surveys out to the wider fanbase at intervals during the season. CUSG agendas and meeting minutes are published at <https://www.carlisleunited.co.uk/fans/cusg/>



We commit to meeting throughout the course of the season and operating a multi-level engagement approach whereby over and above our CUSG fan group meetings, we also hold fan forums and focus sessions to allow all those interested in attending to listen, contribute and engage with a number of Club personnel.

We publish minutes and outputs from our CUSG meetings to ensure all supporters are aware of the activity undertaken. Our Chief Executive will also provide periodical updates for all our fans on the progress made against our Fan Engagement objectives.

Our Chief Executive will provide a written update to CUSG for each meeting, which will be published on the website.

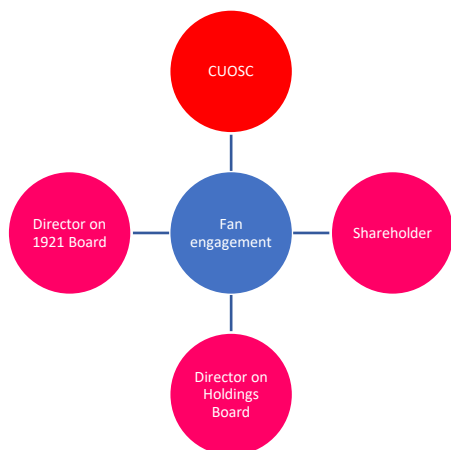
All our meetings are attended by senior staff, (CEO or alternate, media representative, EDI officer) and our approach is one of inclusivity and transparency, other staff will attend where required.

The Club recognises that it must communicate proactively and widely with all its supporters and community. Our Supporter Engagement Policy which defines our approach.

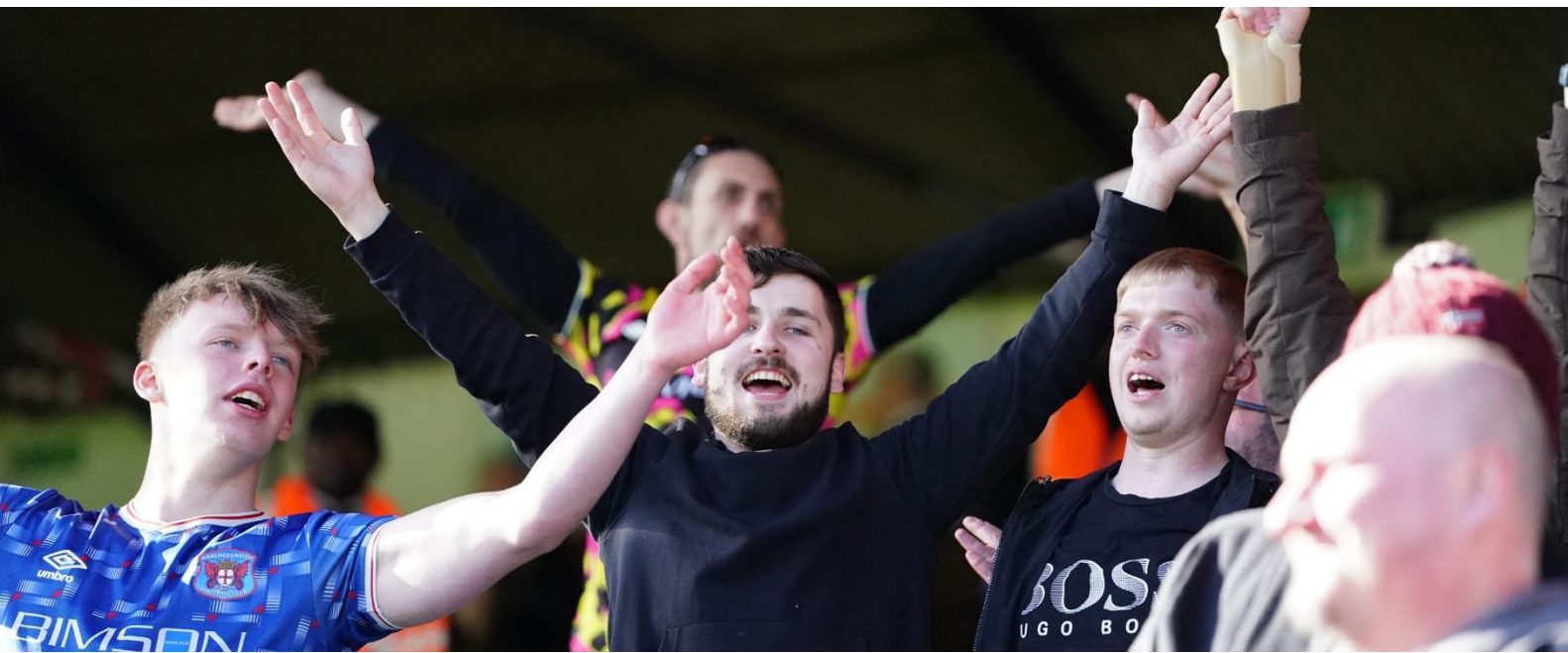
All major news and announcements are publicised through the official website, and the Club's social media feeds.

The Club will endeavour to publicise changes to what we do via all channels of communication including Brunton Park reception, official website, and direct mailings. The Club engages in a two-way relationship with supporters.

**Carlisle United Official Supporters Club (“CUOSC”)
CUOSC owns 10% of Holdings. It has a board director on the boards of 1921 and Holdings. It plays a key part in our fan engagement approach.**



The CUOSC 1921 director is also a member of the Club's leadership group.



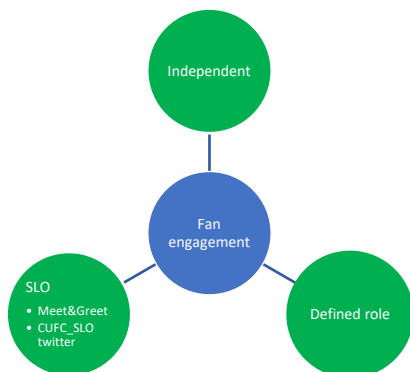
Supporters Liaison Officer

CUSG has appointed an independent Supporter Liaison Officer

<https://www.carlisleunited.co.uk/fans/supporter-liaison-officer-slo/> chosen by our supporters' groups who are members of CUSG, with a role they defined. The SLO shall:

- act as a point of contact for supporters; and
- liaise regularly with the Club's management (including, but not limited to, on safety and security-related issues)
- <https://www.carlisleunited.co.uk/news/2021/june/slo-description-of-the-role/>

The SLO is independent of the Club but works very closely with it.



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer

The Club also appointed an Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Officer (Teresa Mulholland) and a Disabled Liaison Officer (Louise Banks) for ticketing issues.

The EDIO is part of CUSG with a defined role to:

- Act as point of contact for supporters on EDI related issues and projects
- Liaise regularly with the Club's management regarding EDI issues
- Work closely with the Club's supporter groups, local community groups, organisations and individuals
- Develop a disabled group to represent the interest of fans with disabilities
- Encourage wider participation in the Club





INDICATIVE ACTIVITY 24/25

Our Engagement Plans for 2024/25, Timeline of Fan Engagement Activity

1. Board representation

CUOSC has seat on the board of directors of Carlisle United Association Football Club (1921) Limited and C.U.F.C. Holdings Limited.

2. Supporter groups

Directors and management of the Club will meet with the independent Carlisle United Supporters Group (CUSG) groups on at least a bi-monthly basis. CUSG is independent of the Club and comprises representatives as it determines.

All CUSG members will set the agenda in line with the CUSG constitution. The agenda will be public and published in advance. Minutes of meetings must be agreed and published on the Club website, individual supporters' groups sites and sign-posted on social media.

The operations of CUSG are detailed in its constitution

<https://www.carlisleunited.co.uk/news/2021/october/cusg-constitution/>

The Club will be represented by owners, directors or management as invited by CUSG.

The Club CEO will provide a written report for each meeting.

The Club will seek feedback on an on-going basis on all CUSG activities and undertake regular research into supporters' opinions.

Representatives of the Club will attend individual supporters' Club branches meetings where possible.

Other Club staff may be invited to attend CUSG for specific discussions/presentations. (e.g. Safety officer)

Supporter groups will be provided with the opportunity to be represented in the matchday FanZone. This will allow the supporter groups to engage with the fans and be able to better represent them at CUSG meetings.

Directors and owners will make best endeavours to attend supporter group meetings where requested.

3. Supporter meetings

The Club will meet with supporters at least twice per season in an open Fans Forum. The format of the meetings to be agreed prior to the meeting. format may be open door or first-come-first-served policy, through to a smaller sit-down meeting. CUOSC will be invited to attend. No individuals will be excluded without good reason, the Club will apply this provision reasonably.

The Club will be represented by owners, directors or senior executive management. In determining the matters to be discussed, the Club will consult with supporters to ensure material issues are discussed and consulted upon in particular, heritage matters such as:

- any permanent ground move,
- change of Club badge
- substantial change to Club colours
- future opportunity for supporters to invest in the Club

The meetings will provide for discussing matters that might be relevant to the Club at a wider League level or day-to-day matters. A summary will be published on the Club web site and sign-posted on social media. The Club will endeavour to video the events and publish on the internet for fans to watch.

4. Individual supporters

Club staff, officials and shareholders will meet individual supporters if requested. Fans may ask to meet officials using any of its communication channels or by visiting the Club. Alternatively, they can email enquiries@carlisleunited.co.uk

The Club will use social media and all its communication channels to engage in a two-way conversation and engage with supporters,
The Club will follow EFL and best practice guidelines regarding fan engagement

5. Supporter consultation

We will consult with CUSG specifically on:

- Club charter
- Supporter structuring policy
- Fan Code of Conduct
- Annual review of the Fan Engagement Plan

6. Visiting Supporters

CUFC welcomes away supporters and will afford them the hospitality expected to be given to CUFC fans when travelling away.

COMMITMENT TO UPDATE FANS



Collaboration and Sharing, Listening and Learning, Our Commitment to You

The Club will consult with CUSG groups on the FEP each year. The 1921 board will approve the FEP, which will then be published on the website.

Carlisle United commits to provide regular updates to supporters regarding its fan engagement activity. We want our fans to feel involved in the process, and we therefore commit to listening to feedback and views on any aspect of this plan.

Should there be any changes or updates to the Club's 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's **Chief Executive** 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. To read about the Club's ongoing Supporter Engagement activity please visit our official website <https://www.carlisleunited.co.uk/fans/fan-engagement/> for more.



FROM OUR FAN GROUPS

CUOSC's role as 10% shareholder and an active participant on both the 1921 board and in the Club Leadership Group is a clear sign that fan engagement is genuinely at the heart of our Club. We are proud of this and use the opportunity to interact with fans where ever possible.

"As a Club, we have been exemplary to many others for fan engagement for a long time. The fan engagement policy being a working document between the Club and the Carlisle United Supporters' Groups further evidences this. Commitment and effort shown from the Club to engage meaningfully is really pleasing."

Matt Spooner, Chair of CUOSC and Board representative

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"Carlisle United's fan engagement has evolved significantly to meet changing expectations. Fan group representatives now regularly meet with club management, fostering a sense of inclusion and belonging. The club has also expanded community programs to include more diverse and inclusive initiatives, strengthening ties with both fans and the local community. Club owners and senior management hold regular open forums, using technology to broadcast to a wider audience, enhancing transparency and fostering stronger connections with fans and the broader community."

Carlisle United are also increasingly utilising social media to interact directly with fans providing live Q&A sessions with players, and behind-the-scenes content keep fans connected and engaged. Players regularly visit and interact with the wider community, creating meaningful connections, inspiring fans, and reinforcing the club's commitment to social responsibility and local engagement."

John Kukuc Chair Carlisle United Supporter Groups

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"Fan engagement involves a significant amount of listening and therefore visibility is crucial on a matchday home and away, as well as online. The fan engagement plan demonstrates how we do this collectively so that whenever fans feel they need to raise a query or concern, and on whatever subject that may be about, we can be there to listen."

Simon Clarkson Supporter Liaison Officer

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HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Want to know more? Find out more, please contacts

We'd love to hear back from our supporters on this FEP. Supporters can get involved in **Carlisle United's Fan Engagement Plan** by reaching out to our SLO, CUSG, CUOSC or CEO. 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 established fan groups or participate in Club events and initiatives, to help shape the Fan Engagement Plan and make a positive impact on the overall fan experience. To read more about the Club's established supporters' groups please **CLICK HERE** <https://www.carlisleunited.co.uk/fans/cusg/>

Contact	Group/Role	Details/email/web
Nigel Clibbens	CEO and Fan Engagement Lead	nigel.clibbens@carlisleunited.co.uk
Simon Clarkson	SLO	slo@carlisleunited.co.uk
Matt Spooner	CUOSC Chair & 1921 board representative	matt@cuosc.org.uk
Teresa Mulholland	EDI officer	edi@carlisleunited.co.uk
Billy Atkinson	CUOSC & Holdings board representative	info@cuosc.org.uk



ACTION PLAN

Reference	Action	Date
1	Club Charter Draft Review Approval – 1921 board	30/06/24 DONE
2	Fan Code of Conduct Draft Review Approval – 1921 board	30/06/24 DONE
3	Fan Engagement Plan Draft – CUFC Review – CUSG Approval – 1921 board EFL Submission Publish on website	17/07/24 22/07/24 30/07/24 31/07/24 1/08/24
4	Supporter Sanction Policy Draft – CUFC Review – CUSG Approval – 1921 board	12/07/24 30/07/24 6/08/24
5	Fan forum, 1 – Target Q3 2024 Fan forum, 2 – Target Q2 2024	Aug 2024 30/06/25
6	CUSG meetings Six weekly	Ongoing

Document version	FINAL 2425	
Preparation	Draft – CUFC Review – CUSG Approval – 1921 board EFL Submission Publish on website	17/07/24 22/07/24 30/07/24 31/07/24 1/08/24
Next review	By 31 July 2025	
Signed		Nigel Clibbens Chief Executive