

# Hibs' supporter directors update fans about ongoing issues



Hibs Supporter Directors Frank Dougan and Tracey Smith have issued the first in a series of regular updates to inform fans of what has been happening behind the scenes at Easter Road.

Details were published on the club website and cover issues such as the 'Behind the Goals' bar, relocating from the Famous Five Stand, the club store, the tannoy system, the kit launch, online ticketing and a proposed sensory room.

What have we been doing for you?

It's been just over two months now since the elections and we have been working hard liaising with a whole range of supporters who have raised issues.

Communication was the key element that was recurring throughout the campaign. The level of feedback regarding updates or relaying information from issues raised seemed to be lacking, and this is something we have both taken on board and discussed to ensure we get it right for you. The feedback so far has been more positive with regards to online communication, and will ensure that we continue to improve on that.

Those of you who are online will have seen us respond to issues that have been raised within the forums, twitter and Facebook. These have ranged from Season Ticket questions, Behind the Goals, individual circumstances, singing section, relocation within the stadium plus many more. Those which are more sensitive or individual we will take offline and deal

directly with the person. Not everyone is online and we have been speaking face-to-face with supporters on match days and events. It's important that you all have a route to discuss matters with us.

We have had two board meetings since being elected and I think it's important to share that we are involved in the whole board meeting and not just selected areas. We have a slot on the agenda to discuss issues/feedback from supporters and give a general update. We are treated the same as all other board members.

What is happening with the big issues?

Behind the Goals

We have spoken to a lot of supporters who have shown their concern over the closure of Behind the Goals. The club would have liked to have announced the closure with a solution but unfortunately, due to the removal of the lift access and the new Season Ticket Campaign, this was unavoidable.

The club are working tirelessly looking at all options available to them for a temporary solution for the beginning of the season. A permanent solution is also being looked at in the East Stand.

As soon as we have an update on this we will let you know.

We are also looking at introducing a Hibs Kids Zone for families at the Norton Park (church hall) which we think will be an exciting addition to the matchday experience. A working group has been set up to discuss the requirements and what matchday activities we can introduce. The kids are the future of this club and it's important that their matchday experience makes them feel part of something special.

Relocation in Stadium from Famous Five Upper

Due to the removal of the lift access in the North Stand, some

of the supporters have found themselves having to find new seats. The club working alongside with ourselves, have managed to relocate the majority of supporters that have been affected. Frank has also shown some supporters around the stadium, to find which available area would be more suitable for them.

We understand this hasn't been easy for some supporters due to being in their seats for a number of years. We do hope that we have managed to find a solution which works for you and that you will be happy there for many more seasons to come.

### Clubstore

You all have very different opinions regarding the club store and what you would like to see sold.

As you are aware the club have signed a deal with PSL (Provan Sports Limited) which are a Glasgow based company. The Working Together Group "Wear your Colours", which we are both part of, met with Alan Provan from PSL and we were very impressed with his presentation.

PSL are not restricted to one supplier therefore this gives us great scope to bring in so many different items to the store. PSL look at quality first which is fantastic and I know quality is something which a lot of you have previously stressed about with regards to some of the stores merchandise. We feel you will be pleasantly surprised when the store re-opens and the lead up to Christmas.

The store re-opened with a soft launch on Friday 9th June and the feedback so far has been extremely positive.

### Kit Launch

The new kit was launched last week, with the Home Kit going on sale on Friday 16th June and the Away Kit to be launched at the end of June. The club have listened to all of your

feedback from last year and have worked hard to ensure we can launch the kit in time for the July Trades/ holiday season.

The launch was a big success and we hope the away top will be a popular seller when it becomes available to purchase.

A lot of you have asked about sizing and the tops will go up to a size 5XL – which is sized similar to Nike 4XL.

### Tannoy System

This is something which a lot of you have brought up throughout the course of the season. For the final game of the season there was the introduction of the speakers on the pitch but for some areas of the ground this still didn't help.

We realise that the East and West Upper sections are the worst affected on match days.

The cost associated with replacing the tannoy system is huge and the club have been looking at alternative measures on how to rectify the issues that may be more cost effective.

Safety announcements can be heard in all areas and this is something which is monitored by our Health and Safety officer.

We will continue to monitor the situation and appreciate all feedback you can give us.

### Online Ticketing

Due to the negative feedback we have had in recent months regarding Online Ticketing, we have fed back to the club the issues that have arisen and the club have worked hard to ensure the process is smoother.

The feedback from the Scottish Cup Semi Final purchasing of tickets was so much more positive and a lot of you found it a very easy and quick process to purchase those tickets.

How are we going to communicate over the coming months?

We will be updating you bi-monthly with an update similar to this. This ensures that we have more to update you on. The club will put this up on the Website which will then feed into the forums and will be shared via the Club's Facebook and Twitter accounts. Our next update will be at the beginning of August which will follow the July Board Meeting.

We will also be holding a surgery at the first home game of every second month. This will be held in the same place for each of these games so you will always know where and when to find us. Our first surgery will be held on Saturday 15th July 2017 prior to the Betfred Cup Match against Montrose. Time and location to be confirmed. Please note that all dates will be advertised on the club website.

We will continue to answer any issues which arise via the forums, Facebook groups and Twitter as we have been doing. Not everyone is online and we will always be available at home and away matches.

We will be leading the Working Together meetings which are on the last Monday of every second month. Moving forward, minutes of these meetings will be available on the Club Website. These meetings are available to all Hibernian Supporters and we welcome new faces and fresh ideas. We also have an online platform available to supporters who wish to contribute but cannot make the meetings. If you are interested in contributing and making a difference, please get in touch.

Our email addresses are:

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Other News

Academy

We understand how important the development of our young

players is to you all and we are both now members on the Academy board. We have some great talent coming through and as well documented, some of these players will break through into the first team next season.

The board are working on Project Brave at present with our Stage 2 bid due to be submitted by the middle of July.

### Disabled Supporters Association

The Association are currently working on a booklet for all Disabled Supporters which will act as a guide for when attending matches and where they can access information.

Frank has been named as the Club's Disabled Access Officer with the SFA

### Sensory Room

At the board meeting last month, we spoke with the board about the possibility of having a sensory room in the stadium. This started from a Facebook post from Gary O'Farrell who described his experience of taking his autistic son to the match. Unfortunately, Gary's son only managed to watch 12 minutes of the match from kick-off until he had to then leave. The Queen of the South match which he attended had a great attendance and the crowds proved too much for his son.

We met Gary and spoke to him about his son and his experience and Gary received a lot of support from fellow supporters as well some sharing their experiences.

The board were already aware of the proposal and have already spoken with the Hibernian Community Foundation who will be looking into the possibility of a Sensory Room. The Foundation have made contact with Kate and Peter Shippey of the Shippey Foundation and are in talks to arrange a time to look at the sensory room at Sunderland FC. This would be a long-term project and requires a lot of due diligence. As well as the

sensory room the Foundation are looking at the possibility of creating a space where supporters who have special requirements on a match day can come and watch the match in a safe and secure environment.