



**PLYMOUTH ARGYLE FOOTBALL CLUB**  
Home Park, Plymouth, PL2 3DQ

## **FANS' ASSEMBLY MINUTES – SATURDAY, 12 FEBRUARY**

### **Attendees**

Andrew Parkinson – Chief Executive Officer  
Zac Newton – Club Secretary  
Daniel Phippen – Supporter Relations Manager  
Virginia Pike – London & Argyle Fans Trust representative  
Graham Clark – Cornish representative  
Mark Smith – Devonport End representative  
Mike Gale – Mayflower Grandstand representation  
Bill McCarthy – Vice Presidents representative  
Jan McGregor – Senior Greens representative  
Frazer Lloyd-Davies – Green Taverners representative  
Mark Edwards – Northern & Avon Branches representative  
Simon Hallett – Argyle chairman (attended the latter part of the meeting)

Apologies were received from Steve Helley (PADSA), Michael Cooper (Lyndhurst) and Christian Kent (Argyle Head of Venue)

Zac advised that the previous Fans' Assembly Secretary had resigned. Mark Edwards took notes and, after the meeting, volunteered to be the Secretary.

Andrew opened with club update saying where we were at and summarising the current position for this season.

Zac proceeded to work through the submitted questions calling on the appropriate Argyle representative to answer.

### **MAYFLOWER STAND**

The Mayflower Grandstand lower tier works very well, whilst conferencing and hospitality are better than expected from a revenue and usage perspective. The upper seats are safe but are not as big as modern expectations.

Various consultants have been spoken with and an architect has drawn up plans which are now being looked at to see how they could be implemented. Car parking yet to be completed but has to be done soon.





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Other projects include seat replacement and screen. Looking at sequencing to ensure all can be done. Hope is that Mayflower can be done over the summer but not certain at this stage. Information will be shared in the coming months.

Current capacity is circa 18,000 but 17K with segregation, etc. However, some seats can't be used because of extremely restricted view and access/egress numbers – thus this capacity is currently reduced from 2500 to 1250. One plan takes this to 1900. Seat comfort can also be improved using a fabricated overlay.

#### **PARK AND RIDE**

Car parking fills pretty quickly but Argyle is better than most clubs with the park and ride which, will continue as we have good relationships with the council. Various discussions are ongoing but there is no obvious solution at this stage.

#### **SAFE STANDING/RAIL SEATING**

The FA is working with safety authorities and there is a pilot scheme which is looking at how it works over a whole season. Implementation is not necessarily straightforward for reasons of stewarding, impact on the view of other blocks and any solution has to be replicated at the away end which means it is less viable at Home Park.

#### **BIG SCREEN**

Argyle are engaging with providers to ascertain best location to minimise seat loss, maximise viewing and look at structural integrity of various parts of the stadium. Provisional plans are in place and the Board has approved costs so we can expect an announcement in the next few weeks with a build over the off season. Rationale will be explained at the time of announcement.

#### **FOOTBALL REVIEW**

The recent Tracey Crouch review was part-supported. Argyle are broadly in support of the review, particularly with regard to how clubs are run to avoid more cases like Bury.

There were 47 recommendations, including an independent regular for the professional game. Argyle believe that revenue could be distributed more fairly but it is self-evident that the Premier League does not want this. The EFL view is that they will accept regulation as long as redistribution angle is covered. Crouch suggested transfer fee levy and TV revenues as areas to consider.

April 23rd is when the law should be through Parliament. General reservation is around the powers of





## PLYMOUTH ARGYLE FOOTBALL CLUB

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the regulator and EFL finding own solutions rather than having them imposed. Owners and Directors test is an area of concern as some clubs are well run whilst others not so much so this needs regulation - including around how any redistributed monies are used. In order to fully support the review, Argyle need the detail, for example the salary cap was proposed to be flat, but Argyle believe it should be based on percentages of revenue.

### FIXTURES

Zac confirmed that the club does make representation to EFL regarding fixtures. Argyle receive a questionnaire and puts its case forward based on dates to avoid big events etc. Postponements have played a part in this year's situation with lots of away games in February and home in March.

This season the EFL has been far more prescriptive about postponed games due to the massive fixture disruption. Expect disruption next season due to World Cup being in November.

With regards to fixture postponement, Argyle remain vigilant, but things are changing in line with Government requirements. The club will continue to protect first team squad. Argyle postponements and re-timing of these games were in line with league rules.

### CLUB SHARE ISSUE

The Chairman explored the potential of a share issue, but has been unable to do this so far due to rules on primary and secondary shares - meaning they have to be more expensive (eg at Rangers the minimum investment was £500). Next season the intention is to open a potential membership scheme but there will be an announcement in the coming months.

### TICKETING

What schemes are the club considering to improve things, particularly for away fans?

Other than Chelsea, every away game has always gone to General Sale, therefore implementing anything new at this stage of the season is not worthwhile.

The club promised to go away and look at it after various suggestions came from the floor and the PAFC attendees.

The Chelsea sale was good and smooth. Online queueing system worked well. Shows that Argyle are moving forward in other areas.

Wheelchair users get a discount - is this fair on other (ambulant) disabilities? Wheelchair supporters





## PLYMOUTH ARGYLE FOOTBALL CLUB

Home Park, Plymouth, PL2 3DQ

do not have a choice in the Lyndhurst and the view is not the best so this is reflected in the price. Mayflower do not get a discount as their view etc is excellent. Why is ticketing for home games left too close to the game.

Argyle have tried various ways of selling tickets and found that there is no uplift in sales with long lead times and it can cause issues such as lost tickets etc. Most tickets sold in the last few days before a game. Marketing around a game is helped by releasing tickets nearer to the match.

Disabled tickets cannot be booked online.

The ticket office is looking into this and thought they had a solution but it did not function correctly at the start of the season. However, Ticketmaster believe that have found a solution by splitting the user and the carer. This will be implemented over the summer ready for next season.

Can Argyle offer ticket insurance?

If interest is suitable then the club would implement insurance, but it would need to be sourced.

### MISCELLANEOUS

What % of PAFC is vaccinated?

We are above the national and EFL average.

Security In light of recent hooliganism

The recent scenes were appalling, and Argyle reacted quickly, working with the Police to issue 35 club bans for encroaching in the away end (2.5 years) and life bans for violence. Police are pursuing 2/3 on criminal charges. Wigan also pursuing seriously and 18 of their fans are going through the courts.

Police and the safety advisory group have insisted on extra segregation and physical barriers (eg loss of bottom 2 rows). The zero tolerance approach will continue.

How do we "police" bans. Very hard but there are dedicated officers and fan intelligence etc. Photo on season ticket suggested and will be fed back to relevant parts of the club.

Lessons learned and should improve response if it happens again. EFL has confirmed that hooliganism is on the rise generally.





## PLYMOUTH ARGYLE FOOTBALL CLUB

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Separately, Block 3 is crammed in at half time and anti-social behaviour means people struggle getting to concession stands etc. PAFC has taken this on board and it has been fed back to stewarding teams for that area.

Speeding up concessions service at half time.

PAFC are trialling 2-pint mugs and looking at other ideas such as pre-pouring pints, dedicated beer concession, etc. Hospitality survey did not include question on price.

Simon commented on this that people will always say it is too expensive if asked. Suggestions from the floor included asking for price ranges etc.

Horseshoe leaks.

This stand is 20 years old and has suffered from a lack of investment so there is a rolling programme of maintenance now in place.

Can there be options to contact assembly members via the PAFC website or a dedicated Fans Assembly email address / form.

Zac will take a look into this and Dan advised he is happy to support with social media etc for groups.

A summary of final comments from the floor.

5 decades of supporting club this is the best we believe it has ever been run.

Supporter liaison is excellent and Zac said to let him know if the standards fall.

Belief is that we have brought talent in from many non-football areas and this has improved us overall.

