

HARROGATE TOWN AFC FAN ENGAGEMENT PLAN 2025-26 SEASON



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INTRODUCTION TO THE PLAN

We are pleased to announce our Fan Engagement Plan ahead of the 2025/2026 season.

This marks another important step in our ongoing commitment to improving how we connect with and listen to our supporters. Over the past three years, we've made significant progress—culminating in achieving Gold status in the EFL Family Excellence Award. This recognition reflects the hard work, learning and dedication across the club. But we know there's still more to do.

Our Fan Engagement Plan is a key tool in ensuring that our communication with supporters is clear, consistent and constructive. Fans are the heart of every football club. Recent EFL guidance and legislation reinforce just how vital your role is—not only in shaping the future but in safeguarding the heritage of our club.

As our fan base grows, so must our efforts to ensure every voice is heard. Last year, with support from the Football Supporters' Association, we launched our independent Fan Advisory Panel—made up of supporters from across our Club. This panel plays a critical role in representing fans and strengthening the two-way dialogue between club and our Fan base.

Harrogate Town is in a strong position, with exciting developments ahead. Together—with your support—we will continue to build a stronger, more inclusive, and more sustainable football club.

Thank you for being part of this journey.



FAN ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES 2025-26

Our primary objective is to create an inclusive and interactive fan experience that fosters a strong sense of community and belonging.
We aim to engage with you more and are committed to building a welcoming, safe and inclusive environment where you feel valued and where you can have your say. Our main objectoves for 2025-26 are:

1	Communicate Club updates across multiple platforms to reach more supporters.
2	Expand our ***Calendar of Events and Fan Engagement Content*** for Supporters to attend and interact with.
3	Work closely with our ***Fan Advisory Panel and the Football Supporters Association (FSA)*** to facilitate supporter representation on Club matters.

We intend to evaluate our progress throughout the year and report back to the League on activities and achievements at the end of the season as we did for 2024-2025. We will continue to improve our Fan Engagement as we grow. As always, we're open to ideas and feedback so please don't hesitate to get in touch.

FAN ENGAGEMENT APPROACH



Harrogate Town AFC's Fan Engagement approach seeks to continually improve dialogue with Supporters and ensure that your voice is heard. We value your input and are committed to creating a strong and positive relationship with you.

To achieve this, the Club will work to engage with you in a number of ways.

We will meet regularly with our Fan Advisory Panel and hold Fans Forums and Season Ticket Holder events so we can listen and learn on what matters to you.

Minutes of every meeting will be published so all fans will have access to what was discussed. Our senior leadership team will provide periodic updates on progress against our fan engagement objectives.

Our approach is one of Inclusivity, Honesty and Transparency.

FAN ENGAGEMENT – 2024/25 SEASON ACHIEVEMENTS



Record-breaking Fans' Forums
We hosted two Fans' Forums with a record number of attendees, providing open and honest dialogue between the club and our supporters.



First-Ever Season Ticket Holder Event
We delivered our inaugural event exclusively for Season Ticket Holders featuring guest speakers First Team Manager Simon Weaver, Assistant First Team Manager Paul Thirlwell, Academy Lead Coach Kevin Wilson and Recruitment Manager Lloyd Kerry. This offered a unique opportunity to thank you for your loyalty and gain valuable feedback.

Open Training Session
Supporters were invited to watch the first team train, giving fans a behind-the-scenes look at preparations and a chance to meet players, coaches and first team staff.





Launch of the Fan Advisory Panel
We established our first-ever Fan Advisory Panel, ensuring regular supporter input into key decisions and strategic planning.

FAN ENGAGEMENT – 2024/25 SEASON ACHIEVEMENTS



Introduction of a new fan zone
We successfully launched the Gator Zone – a vibrant, family-friendly matchday area focused on engaging with young supporters.



Improved Matchday Feedback
A new matchday survey was introduced and distributed after every home game. Valuable supporter feedback was captured helping to improve and shape matchday experience.

Focused Themed Matchdays & Community Collaboration
Working closely with our Community Foundation, we delivered several themed matchdays with targeted engagement activities across various supporter demographics.





Young Voice Group
We introduced our Young Voice Group, aimed at listening to and improving the experience for our teenage fans.



FAN ENGAGEMENT – 2024/25 SEASON ACHIEVEMENTS

Junior Supporters Club
Our Junior Supporters Club is growing with over 800 members to date giving our younger fans regular updates, exclusive content, and unforgettable experiences.



Kickback Scheme
Our Kickback Scheme is a partnership scheme between Harrogate Town AFC and local grassroots clubs. Our official Partner clubs are rewarded with complimentary match tickets to home games making match days accessible for everyone. 20% of all additional ticket sales associated with each partner club's membership is paid back to the Junior clubs to invest in anything they need to run such as equipment, kit and transport.
Last season, we paid £2243 back to our partners who also benefit from meeting the players, having content in our programme, LED screen and PA on match days, prizes for fundraising and our presence at their events or gala's.
For more information on how to join the scheme, visit our website or contact Emily Elmes; emilyelmes@harrogatetownafc.com



First-Time Fan Visits
We welcomed hundreds of new supporters through our First-Time Fan experience—an initiative that makes new visitors feel extra special, welcomed and supported during their first visit to the Exercise stadium.

Throughout the 2024/25 season, we made fantastic progress in strengthening our relationship with supporters and creating an inclusive, enjoyable experience for fans of all ages.

We are proud of the progress we have made, but this is just the beginning. We remain committed to creating meaningful connections with all our supporters, new and old, and delivering a matchday experience that is welcoming, exciting, and representative of our entire community. Thank you for being a part of our journey.



TIMELINE OF FAN ENGAGEMENT EVENTS 2024/25 SEASON

OCTOBER 24

- Fans Forum 1- open to ALL supporters
- Harrogate Town Business Club sponsor event
- **Together Against Racism talk in local school and matchday campaign**

NOVEMBER 24

- Season Ticket Event 1
- Evening with first team personnel
- **Yorkshire Young Achievers Award- sponsorship of the Education Award**

DECEMBER 24

- Dedicated Junior Supporters Christmas matchday

JANUARY 25

- Fans Forum 2- open to ALL supporters
- Harrogate Town Business Club sponsor event

MARCH 25

- Season Ticket Event 2
- Event with Players
- **Unite for Access Matchday campaign**

APRIL 25

- Open Training Session
- School Holidays
- **Launch of our Memory Loss Lanyard Scheme**

MAY 25

- Fans Forum 3- open to ALL supporters
- Harrogate Town Business Club sponsor event
- **Launch of our Male Incontinence Bins Scheme**

FAMILY EXCELLENCE SCHEME

Harrogate Town AFC was awarded with a Family Excellence Gold Award for the 2024/25 season for outstanding work in delivering an unforgettable matchday experience for families.

The EFL's Family Excellence Scheme assesses the matchday experience Clubs provide for families. Throughout the season, Clubs receive two visits from family assessors who evaluate the matchday experience for families from purchasing tickets right through to the moment they leave the stadium. The family assessors consider the quality of matchday activations and experience, stadium accessibility and facilities, retail and refreshments, and how the Club communicates with families.

The award represents the first time the club has achieved this rank, an improvement on the Silver award received last season.

The club was placed third highest out of all 24 League Two clubs and 13th in the entire 72-team Football League, one of only 18 clubs to be awarded Gold standard.





We are absolutely elated to have achieved the Gold Award within the EFL Family Excellence Scheme. Growing attendances and improving the overall match day experience for all ages have been our primary objective for the last three years and we have worked incredibly hard, using the scheme as a framework, to help us deliver the best possible experience for our Supporters.

We have seen significant growth in attendances and a lot more younger families coming to games as we evolve.

All EFL Clubs are rated across 12 different areas of the organisation and we have achieved an average score of 9 out of 10 across them all. This is fantastic, however, the stand out score and most important aspect in any business is our people. We are very proud to share that we had a top score of 10 out of 10 for our people!

We have a wonderful team of dedicated passionate individuals throughout the football club. When we all get together on match days, combined with our magnificent Supporters, it is truly a special place to be. Thank you to everyone who is part of Harrogate Town. **This is a credit to each and every one of you!**

FAN ADVISORY PANEL

"The Harrogate Town AFC Fan Advisory Panel is an independent body that was formed in early 2025. We exist to ensure that regular structured dialogue between Harrogate Town AFC and its fanbase happens with the aim of improving Supporters' experience. The Panel seeks to strengthen the relationship between the Club and its fanbase, ensuring the Club actively listens to supporters and takes your views into account."

The Panel consists of up to nine representatives, one of whom is nominated by the Harrogate Town Independent Supporters Club committee.

Our focus is on long term strategic issues with the aim of ensuring that Harrogate Town AFC's Board and senior executives take into account the views of Supporters when making decisions about the direction of the Club. This could include areas such as overall Club strategy, protecting our heritage, governance and engagement.

We will also work to ensure that Harrogate Town AFC's Board and senior executives understand the views of Supporters in their discussions at a national policy level with government, the EFL, the Football Association and other national bodies.

We will undertake surveys to allow us to accurately reflect the views of Harrogate Town AFC Supporters in our dealings with the Club Board and senior executives, in addition to drawing on insights from existing supporter groups and networks.

We would love to hear your views!
Please get in touch by emailing us at fansvoice@harrogatetownafc.com



Marytn Wood
Chair of the Fan Advisory Panel

COMMITMENT TO UPDATE FANS

Harrogate Town AFC agrees to comply in full with EFL Regulation 128 and its requirements regarding Supporter Engagement.

We commit to providing regular updates to you, our Supporters regarding Fan Engagement activity. We want you to feel involved in the process and commit to responding to feedback on any aspect of this Plan.





Regular meaningful communication with Supporters is important. We will continue to do this through various channels such as official Supporters Groups meetings, working group sessions, 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.
We are always seeking to provide more opportunities for Supporters to be involved. Most recently, as a result of consulting and engaging with our fanbase, we have reviewed Ticket Pricing for U21's, U18's and Family tickets.

Should there be any changes or updates to the FEP, we will communicate these clearly and promptly explaining the reasons behind the changes with full transparency. The Club's CEO will regularly update you on the performance of the FEP including successes or challenges faced and how these are being addressed.

We welcome all feedback and would love to hear from you.

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSIVITY

At Harrogate Town AFC, we believe that football should be a game for everyone.

We are proud to be part of the **EFL's Code of Practice**, an accreditation scheme that assesses all 72 EFL clubs on their equality, diversity, and inclusion (ED&I) practices. In the 2023/24 season, we achieved the **Bronze Award**, a reflection of our continued commitment to building a welcoming and inclusive environment for all.



Our work doesn't stop there. Over the past year, we've introduced a number of initiatives to make our club and community more accessible and supportive. In partnership with **Prostate Cancer UK** and the **PHS Group**, we've installed **male incontinence bins** across our stadium, a small but vital step in recognising men's health issues and breaking the stigma. We've also launched our **Memory Loss Lanyard Scheme**, helping fans with dementia feel more comfortable and supported on matchdays.





EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSIVITY



Collaboration is at the heart of what we do. We've teamed up with several brilliant local organisations throughout the season, hosting themed matchdays that highlight causes and amplify voices within our community. Our Community Foundation continues to make a real difference in Harrogate and the wider district, from Walking Football sessions that promote health, wellbeing and tackle loneliness, to programmes for refugee adults that support social networking and community integration.





Looking ahead, we're excited about future projects. We're working on launching a football group for children with disabilities, and we're planning to further enhance the matchday experience to ensure everyone feels included and valued. Our goal is to grow our community connections and provide even more opportunities for people of all backgrounds to engage with the club in meaningful ways.

We're proud of the progress we've made but even more determined to keep moving forward. Together, we can continue to make Harrogate Town a place where everyone belongs.

#ProudToBeTown

LOOKING FORWARD



TIMELINE OF FAN ENGAGEMENT EVENTS 2024/25 SEASON

August 2025

- Family Excellence Celebrations- dedicated matches to celebrate achieving gold in the EFL Family Excellence Scheme

September 2025

- **Play Safe**
- **World Alzheimer's Day**

October 2025

- Fans Forum 1- all supporters welcome
- **Together Against Racism dedicated matchday**

November 2025

- **Men's Mental Health Month**
- Season Ticket Event 1
- Yorkshire Young Achievers Award Sponsorship
- **Remembrance Day Match**

December 2025

- Junior Supporters Club fans forum

February 2026

- **Rainbow Ball Activations**

March 2026

- Players Engagement Event
- **Unite for Access matchday campaign**

April 2026

- Fans Forum 2- open to all supporters
- Open Training Session

2025/26 Season Ongoing Events

- Young Voice fans meeting
- Fan Advisory Panel Meetings
- Club drop in sessions with the Fan Engagement Team





HOW TO GET INVOLVED

PLEASE GET IN TOUCH...

We'd love to hear back from you. Please contact our CEO, Sarah Barry, Fan Engagement Manager, Hamilton Mattock or our Fan Advisory Panel with any feedback or ideas on how we can improve Fan Experience.

CONTACT US:
Sarah Barry, CEO
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Fan Advisory Panel
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