SUPPORTER DIRECTOR UPDATE – APRIL 2022

As we move into Spring and the optimism that usually brings, all of us Swans fans are in a state of flux. Consistently inconsistent is the best description I have seen of the performances and results of the team so far this season.

There have been periods when we have looked a very good and capable side, and then others when, to say the least, we have been poor. Most fans understood when Russell Martin took over at the start of the season that we are a club and team under transition and that a mid-table finish would be a reasonable outcome. It looks like that's where our season will end.

With our parachute payments finished, the club has to live within its means, and player trading will be an important element of funding going forward. There's little doubt that the first team squad is light in terms of numbers and players that fit the mould that Russell wants to fill. The summer transfer window promises to be an interesting period, perhaps more than ever over recent seasons.

The recent debuts of youngsters Nathanael Ogbeta and Cameron Congreve are proof that much of our future will depend on the success of youngsters coming through from the Academy and U23's. Finding the balance between youth and experience will be key in creating a successful side next season.

Off the field the whole world has been shocked by the events in Ukraine. Football fans in this country and throughout the footballing world have made clear their solidarity with the people of Ukraine.

Thanks to the generous donations from the Jack Army at the recent Fulham game, from the Club and the Trust, over £5000 has been donated to the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) appeal. The Club have confirmed that the dozens of pallets containing essential items so generously donated by Swans supporters are already on the way to Ukraine. Further fundraising is ongoing which we hope will provide some comfort to the very many who are suffering.

An immediate affect of this terrible war has been to throw the future of one of the 'Big Six' into doubt. Chelsea's owner Roman Abramovich has been sanctioned and he proposes to write off £1.5bn debt owed by Chelsea FC and to sell the club.

It cannot be good that the accumulation of such massive amounts of debt on the books of any football club is in the interests of our game and there needs to be better regulation.

The current governance of football in the UK is not fit for purpose and we urge for the full implementation of the Fan-Led Review, which looks to provide protection for football clubs as community assets. The main recommendations can be found on the Football Supporters' Association (FSA) website here

We are currently conducting a survey on the review amongst our members and supporters of the club. It's a 6-part survey which will be run over a 6 week period and consists of a simple online questionnaire which will seek to break down the Crouch report into easily digestible pieces. Each part takes just a few moments to complete. Further details can be found on our Trust website here

The first survey dealt with Regulation and Financial Sustainability, and the second focuses on Owning and Operating a Football Club. Note: Since we issued this update to members survey number three on Corporate Governance in Football has been released.

We will be posting links to subsequent surveys on our website and social media platforms every Monday until the end of April. The club are right behind making this survey a success and will be using their social media platforms to encourage Swans fans to participate.

We do hope many of our members and supporters will engage with us and the club over the coming weeks and would like to thank all fans in advance for taking the time to complete the surveys. They represent the most important and timely review into the football pyramid in its history. On completion, we intend to share the results with our supporters, The Football Supporters' Association and Tracey Crouch MP.

After a lot of work, we are thrilled that our new website has now been launched. The redesign has been undertaken to create a more welcoming and streamlined experience for our members and fans. We hope everyone can agree it's easy to use and contains all our key information and documentation. There are still elements of the site that are being worked on and we are sure that by the start of next season, it will be fully functional. We are particularly grateful to Trust Board member Adam Lewis for the work he has put in to bring this redesign to fruition.

To celebrate its launch, we're offering half price Trust membership until the end of the season, and as a special incentive for women to join, we will hold a prize draw for those women that join during this period.

During our March board meeting, we were pleased to welcome Rhodri Mugford, Secretary to the Swansea Schools FA. Rhodri gave us a presentation on the work that the organisation does in running schools football in the area. The Trust has for many years supported both the Schools FA and the Swansea Junior League with financial donations and we look forward to working with them both going forward. We have a rich tradition in this part of Wales in providing stars of the future, and we are committed to continue our support for grass roots football in the area.

The Trust has for been involved with the 'Schools Initiative' since 2018. It was created to give pupils the opportunity, as part of their compulsory Welsh Baccalaureate course, to opt to take on an "Enterprise and Employability Challenge" set by the Trust. The scheme was approved by the Welsh Joint Education Committee and a number of schools took up the challenge.

Sadly COVID has hindered its development but with things slowly returning to some sense of normality, we are once again looking to work with the schools and the authorities to provide a scheme that will assist pupils' development, their understanding of businesses, and how they work. A project very much work in progress. Further details of the 'Schools Initiative' can be seen on our website here

We recently held our March Prize Draw and the winners should have now received their prizes. These included club shirts and copies of our 'Swansea 'Till I Die – a century of supporting the Swansea' book, which were personally signed to the winners by Trust President, Alan Curtis MBE. Full details can be seen here

As previously reported, both myself and Sian Davies have at least a monthly meeting with club Chief Executive Julian Winter. If you have any questions that you would like us to discuss with Julian, please email us at info@swanstrust.co.uk or come and see us at our Pod before any home game. It's located by the club shop. We will endeavour to revert back to you as soon as possible.

The following is a resume of some of the discussions and latest actions resulting from our most recent meetings:

Topic	Key Points
Club	Julian and the whole management team are very happy that the legal situation has been resolved. They are all looking forward to working with the Trust going forward.
Team	Still work in progress and the number of shape of the squad still in transition. Plans for Summer window ongoing but will be amended as situations change. The club is a trading club so there will outgoings as well as incomings. There are no Covid issues within the squad. The majority of the squad are fully vaccinated.
Ladies Team	Club is very pleased with the performances of the team and continue to work closely with them.
Fan-Led Review	The survey has now been rolled out, after a lot of work between the club and the Trust. Full details and links will be shown on the Trust website up to the end of April. The club will also be posting links to these surveys on their social media platforms.
Vetch Field Project	Swansea City Council have now started work to improve the facilities at the Vetch which will benefit the local communities and bear homage to the heritage of football

	played there. Both the club and Trust are involved and are being updated on progress. An official opening is planned in May.
Catering	The new catering programme within the stadium is going well and is constantly under review.
Stand Naming	There is interest in moving this initiative forward. Club will have discussions with existing sponsors and other interested parties on how this can be progressed. To include naming of stands, bars and other stadium areas. Discussions ongoing.
Digital Archive Project	Meeting to be arranged shortly between Club, Trust and a potential supplier. Club and Trust to review potential costs and agree final budgets.
Trust POD	Wi-Fi still not available and electricity supply a problem. Some maintenance work is required over summer.
Away Travel	New arrangements with Turners Coachways have been well received and appear to be working well.
Season Ticket Sales	Renewals for next season at good levels and it is hoped that when the early buy window closes, they will have met planned expectations.

Our work with organisations like the FSA Football Supporters' Association the FPA Former Players Association and Global Swans Supporter Groups Global Swans Supporter Groups continues. We have a Trust Board representative on each of these initiatives and if you would like any further information on any of these projects, please do get in touch with us.

Later this month around 20 Stateside Jacks will be visiting Swansea, and they will be taking in the game against Middlesbrough. We are sure they'll have a great time and a warm Welsh welcome to gods own country. A win on the day will be a great way to sign off their visit, that's for sure.

We are in the process of forming a closer collaboration with the Swans Foundation and will have further updates on this in the coming weeks. *Update – the Trust have since been formally appointed a permanent position on the Foundation Board of Trustees as announced here*

In recent weeks, we have seen the departure from the Trust Board of 2 members - Carys Ingram and Nick Phillips. Both joined the board as new members in August last year but decided to leave due to personal and work commitments.

We thank them both for their efforts during the short time they were involved. Nick in particular was instrumental in bringing our Fan-Led review survey to fruition in recent weeks. We wish them both the very best in their future. They remain committed Trust members and we'll look forward to seeing them at the stadium on match days. They will be keeping us updated on their own fan related campaigns.

In the last week or so, we have seen 2 new members join the board as co-opted members. Ceri Morgan and Diane Hughes both approached the board to see if they could get involved with the work of the Trust over the next few months, with a view to standing for election in the summer. Both bring specific skill sets which will enhance the team, and we welcome them both. We will update their profiles on our website in the coming days.

The long awaited second leg of the derby against Cardiff City is almost upon us. Every Swans fan will be looking forward to it, and we hope we can be the first side to do the double. It won't be for the lack of support, that's for sure.

We have worked alongside our club, Cardiff City, Cardiff City Supporters' Trust and Show Racism the Red Card to actively promote our 'Rivals on the Pitch, United Against Racism' message. At the game you will see video messages and much more from both sets of players and fans driving home the lack of tolerance for anti-social behaviour. All of us must continually work hard to remove this stain on our society.

I do hope you find the above of interest and the details show just some of the work we are doing to support our members and fans of this great club, that we all support 100%

Keep the faith!

Terry Sinnett
Supporter Director
1st April 2022