



# SUPPORTER ENGAGEMENT PLAN

2025/26



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## Our purpose

To be a successful club, on and off the pitch, which is at the heart of our community.

## Our values

**EXTRAORDINARY** - Good people doing extraordinary things

**PEOPLE-CENTRED** - Placing people at the heart of everything we do by caring, driving and developing them to release their highest potential

**TENACIOUS** - Determined and resilient in the drive for success

**VALIANT** - Bold in the decisions we make and the actions we take

**RESPECTFUL** - Maintaining a mutual respect between the club and our stakeholders (Our supporters, community, staff and partners)

## We will be

Acknowledged by industry leaders and competitors as the exemplar football club in the EFL

- Sustainably successful on and off the pitch
- Developing industry-recognised players and staff
- Welcoming and engaging an ever-increasing supporter base to Vale Park

## Club strategic objectives

Establish and maintain a high-performance culture

Increase matchday attendance and supporter engagement

Achieve financial stability and growth

Enhance community engagement and positive impact

Ensure stadium & facilities are high quality and compliant

Promote a culture of diversity and staff well-being

Strengthen compliance procedures and policies

Promote a cohesive and inter-connected club



HOME



## A message from the CEO

On behalf of Carol and Kevin Shanahan and the entire staff at Port Vale Football Club, I am extremely proud to introduce the Supporter Engagement Plan which will take us through our 150th anniversary season.

Having published our first-ever Supporter Engagement Plan 12 months ago, this plan looks to build on the work we've done to date, providing continuity and a platform to strengthen the growing bond we have with our supporters.

That work includes the formation of our Supporter Advisory Board (SAB), who provided invaluable insight and feedback to the club over the course of our promotion campaign and who continue to be a fantastic collaborative body when it comes to our decision-making here at Vale Park.

Last summer, we promised to enhance our communication and supporter engagement and I'm proud to say we've achieved that, putting us in what is now a real position of strength to move forward, with our supporters at the very heart of everything we do.

As we now prepare to celebrate a truly special milestone in our history, there's no better time for us to be taking the next step when it comes to making sure all voices are heard, as we also look to reflect on what has been a special journey to get us to this point.

This plan gives us a clear structure and keeps us accountable, but we'll continue to work with key stakeholders – including the English Football League (EFL) – to make sure we're aligning with industry best practice and evolving our offering wherever we can.

As the EFL's community club, our people are central to who we are and what we believe in, and we're all excited to continue to grow the relationships which mean so much to us.

As always, thank you for your support – we can't wait to see you back at Vale Park soon.



**Matt Hancock**

Chief Executive Officer  
Port Vale Football Club



## Plan overview

We believe this plan will continue to provide a sustainable framework for both the club and our supporters, delivering a more positive and engaging supporter experience moving forward.

Aligned with the Premier League's Fan Engagement Standard, a key aspect of the plan involves working with our Supporter Advisory Board (SAB), details of which are set out below.

We will consult and involve fans in critical matters such as the club's matchday experience and ticketing, areas which the club have been working hard to improve in recent times.

The Supporter Advisory Board will continue to provide a platform for formal dialogue with supporters, allowing the club to take your insights and opinions to collaboratively shape the future of Port Vale.

We are proud of the existing relationships with our various supporter groups, and this move is intended to complement those arrangements on club-wide matters. At the end of every season, we will review this plan to ensure its effectiveness and relevance, with an updated version published each year.

## Supporter voice

### **SUPPORTER ADVISORY BOARD (SAB)**

The Supporter Advisory Board (SAB) at Port Vale serves as a structured and inclusive platform for discussions and long-term planning. Made up of appointed representatives from various supporter groups, club officials and independent members, the Supporter Advisory Board ensures a balanced and diverse perspective when it comes to decision-making processes.

With meetings focused on key areas impacting the supporter experience, community engagement and the club's strategic direction, the SAB will provide recommendations to senior leadership, promoting transparency and accountability



## KEY ASPECTS OF THE SAB

- **Structured engagement:** The SAB will operate as a formal advisory body, focusing on strategic discussions and long-term planning for supporter engagement
- Diverse Membership:** Made up of appointed representatives from various supporter groups, club officials and independent members, ensuring a balanced and diverse perspective
- Bi-annual meetings:** The SAB will host at least two meetings per season to discuss key areas impacting the supporter experience, community engagement and the club's strategic direction
- Agenda-driven discussions:** Meetings will be structured around pre-defined agenda items
- Advisory role:** Provides recommendations to the club's senior leadership on critical matters affecting supporters

## SAB RECRUITMENT

- Members were selected through an application and interview process
- Selection criteria emphasised both lived and professional experiences, promoting a diverse range of experiences
- The interview panel comprised of independent individuals who are passionate about Port Vale
- Applications were treated with strict confidentiality

## COMPOSITION

**Chairperson:** Leads meetings

**Supporter representatives:** 8-12 independently elected members representing various supporter segments

**Independent members:** 2-3 experts or community leaders

**Club officials:** 3-5 senior club representatives, including the CEO

## MEETINGS

**Location:** Vale Park, with virtual participation options

**Agenda:** Submitted two weeks prior and finalised one week before meetings

**Minutes:** Recorded and shared, with key points available to the wider supporter base

## GOVERNANCE

Advisory role with recommendations to senior leadership

Consensus-based decisions, with majority vote if needed

Regular reporting to the CEO and updates to supporters





**CONFIDENTIALITY**

Members signed a confidentiality agreement

**REVIEW**

Annual review of SAB membership, structure and effectiveness

**WORKING GROUPS**

Matchday experience and supporter engagement

- Equality, diversity and inclusion
- Ticketing and retail
- Supporter communication
- Culture and history

**Note:** *The Supporter Advisory Board are not involved in on-pitch football matters.*

**SAB meeting minutes to date:**

[www.port-vale.co.uk/supporter/supporter-advisory-board](http://www.port-vale.co.uk/supporter/supporter-advisory-board)

**SUPPORTER FORUMS**

We value your input and will aim to ensure key staff members attend Supporter Forums to actively participate in club-related discussions, which serve as a platform for open dialogue and constructive conversations.

Additionally, throughout the season, we will provide opportunities for supporter consultation on various club matters.

Supporter Forums will give supporters a chance to provide feedback and ideas, which will then be channelled into the SAB for further consideration and discussion.

We will commit to hosting a minimum of two supporter forums with the club's CEO, First-Team Manager and other senior staff.

**Potential discussion points include:**

- Strategies for season tickets
- Improvements to retail offerings
- Improvements to digital offerings
- Improvements to the overall matchday experience

**Recent examples of supporter feedback influencing positive change at the club include:**

- 150th anniversary input – including community mural
- Splitting the Bycars Stand
- One-off matchday publications
- Introduction of an official app



## Day-to-day support

### SUPPORTER LIAISON OFFICER (SLO)

As part of last season's plan and to help improve supporter engagement on a day-to-day basis, we appointed a Supporter Liaison Officer (Josh Podmore). They serve as the main point of contact for all supporter queries, suggestions, feedback and complaints. The SLO also steers findings from recommendations through to implementation.

### DISABILITY ACCESS OFFICER (DAO)

Our Disability Access Officer (DAO) serves as a dedicated point of contact for supporters with disabilities, ensuring their needs are met and voices heard.

Committed to inclusivity, the DAO works to facilitate a welcoming and accessible environment for all supporters.

### MATCHDAY SLO TEAM

Our Matchday Supporter Liaison Officer team is dedicated to enhancing the matchday experience for supporters, and are readily available to address any enquiries or issues supporters may encounter, ensuring that every matchday at our club is enjoyable and memorable for everyone

### SUPPORTER GUIDES

We will continue to offer comprehensive online guides to enhance the matchday experience, catering to both first-time supporters and seasoned match-goers.

These guides provide essential information about the stadium, matchday timings and facilities, ensuring that everyone feels prepared and informed before coming to Vale Park.

### SURVEYS

At the end of every season, we will reach out to supporters on our database through an annual survey designed to gather insights and feedback about the club.

This feedback will serve as a vital tool in shaping our ongoing improvements and initiatives, ensuring that we continue to evolve every season.





## ADDITIONAL SCHEMES

### COMMUNITY OUTREACH

We strongly believe in the power of community and the importance of giving back and so invite all supporters to get involved with our community outreach work, including volunteering opportunities with the Port Vale Foundation.

Whether you are interested in volunteering your time, skills or resources, there is a role for everyone to play in making a positive impact in our community.

Additionally, Port Vale Foundation offers a variety of activities for supporters to participate in across all age groups.

### CLUB EVENTS

We play host to many different creative events to help entertain and bring together the local community. From Sunday lunches to Comedy Clubs, and '80s nights to Christmas parties, there is an event for everyone.

### SUPPORTER CHARTER

This document reflects our dedication to providing an exceptional experience, fostering inclusivity and working hand-in-hand with our supporters and can be accessed via our website.

### TEAM VALIANTS

Our Team Valiants programme, which is our Junior Supporter Club, includes a 2025/26 replica home shirt, two free match tickets to dedicated Team Valiants fixtures, an access-all-areas training session and much more.

There are three different packages for our younger supporters and ways they get involved: Baby Valiants (0-4 years old), Mini Valiants (5-12 years old) and Teen Valiants (13-16 years old).

### UNIVERSITY OF STAFFORDSHIRE FANZONE

On home matchdays, we will provide a dedicated pre-match fanzone for supporters of all ages to enjoy, located on Car Park C (Hamil Road). A variety of food and beverage stalls will be available, as well as music, games and activities.

### OPEN TRAINING SESSIONS

A pre-season training session open for supporters to attend, with full details to be shared via official club channels.

## Keeping in touch and up-to-date

Supporters can stay connected with all things Port Vale, through our official social media channels, where you'll find all the latest updates, behind-the-scenes content and exclusive insights into the club.

Follow us on Facebook, X, Instagram, TikTok and YouTube, to join our growing community of almost 300,000 followers. We also have a WhatsApp channel for match-going supporters, and an official app which is available on both iOS and Android.

### EMAIL SUBSCRIPTIONS

Sign up for our regular email updates via our official website to receive exclusive news, match previews, ticket offers and more, directly to your inbox.

