

Parents and Carer survey – Summary

Introduction

This paper sets out the primary themes that emerged from the recent Parent and Carer Survey and places them in the context of wider work taking place within the club and other sources of information. The survey received 149 responses in total, a significant number which suggests a strong degree of reliability and validity with the findings.

Facilities, Pitches, and Coaches

There were **very high levels of satisfaction around the topics of facilities, coaching, environment/atmosphere, and communication**. Respondents **overwhelmingly thought that the club was friendly and welcoming**, with excellent facilities, generally very good communications, and a high standard of coaching.

There were, however, some concerns about the **number of times that games on the grass pitches were called off** because of the weather and the **pressure this placed on the 3G pitch**, along with a lack of clarity over who had priority on the 3G pitch in these circumstances.

Respondents were **very positive about the new community hub**, and the opportunities it offers. Many of them said they **would use it if activities were on whilst their children were training or playing**, whilst many respondents also highlighted the potential it **offered for sporting and non-sporting activities for their children and their team-mates beyond the pitch**. Providing **learning and training opportunities, for both children and adults**, was also very popular.

Gendered concerns

Whilst many of the responses from the Girl's section mirrored the findings from the wider club in terms of satisfaction levels, there were also **a higher number of negative or ambivalent comments and results relating to this section**, especially in relation to **girls mental health**. Respondents for the Girl's section were **less likely to be satisfied or very satisfied than respondents from the Boy's section across all of the domains**, with the most **significant differences being in relation to Coaching and Atmosphere/Environment**.

Respondents were also **much less likely to agree or strongly agree that their child benefitted** in different ways from their involvement the club, **especially in relation to mental health benefits and social and emotional benefits**.

Mothers who responded were less likely to be satisfied or very satisfied across all the domains and were less likely to agree or strongly agree about the different benefits of involvement in the club.

Many of the text responses alluded to **perceived inequalities between the girls and boys sections within the club**, including **a general prioritisation of boys**, especially in relation to pitch time, **quality of facilities**, and **quality/care of coaches**. These findings both echo and extend discussions at recent trustees meetings around the name of the club, and themes that emerged from interviews with trustees around the diversity of the board.

More than Football

Parents and carers responded that they thought '**More than football**' was primarily related to the **holistic development of young people**, and the relationships that young people built at the club, including the **family/community feel of the club**, and the **strength of lasting friendships**. A smaller number of responses mentioned the role that the club plays in the wider community. There was **little evidence of respondents being aware of the wider sporting activities of the club** over its long history, and some respondents were unaware of the motto, or felt it wasn't acted upon.

The diversity of responses again echoed discussions at a stakeholder event in 2022 and in interviews with trustees and there are some common themes emerging around the motto.

Single most important thing

The **opportunity to play football and/or get exercise** was the main theme that emerged in response to the question about the single most important thing that the club offered to their child. Other important responses included the **friendships and relationships and being part of a team or community**, development opportunities and/or **the instilling of values, and standards**, and the provision of a **safe, health and positive environment with excellent facilities**.

Suggested actions

- A **summary of the key findings** should be fed back to staff, coaches, other volunteers, parents and players, and wider stakeholders, **emphasising the very positive responses**, and noting that work will be developed to address **the relatively small number of areas where concerns were raised**. This could form part of the communications planning that is already taking place within the club.
- A **specific project could be developed around the girl's section and gendered concerns** at the club more generally. This would be a really positive and timely development, responding to the survey findings, tying in with opportunities provided by the new hub and new staff, building on existing work that the club is already doing, and linked to changes that are taking place within the Women and Girl's section.
- Whilst many respondents were very happy with communications from the club, there are some areas where **specific communications may help to improve parents understanding or appreciation of club decisions**. These could include, for example, game cancellations, pitch allocation, the role of 'open sessions' or 'trials', the importance of the girls section, the wider role of the club in the community and the motto, and the new community hub. It is also likely that communications more generally will become more important as the club grows, and activities and services expand, over the next couple of years.
- Consideration could be given to **developing work around citizenship, values, and the role of the club in the wider community**, which were very important in trustee interviews, but less important amongst survey respondents.
- It might be helpful to **explicitly link the findings of the survey with existing knowledge and/or other pieces of work** that are taking place within the club or have been suggested. Other sources of data may help to provide more detail and insight into some of the findings. Diversifying membership and bringing new skills onto the board may help to support and develop work around gender equality and/or communications. Sub-committees and/or working groups, involving various stakeholders, could lead specific pieces of work.