



The 2024-24 Annual General Meeting of the Arsenal Scotland Supporters Club (ASSC) took place at The Bayview Bar, Dundee, 69b Earn Crescent, Dundee.
on: Saturday 27th July 2024 at 2.00pm

Minutes of the 21st Annual General Meeting

Attendees:

Ben Coburn - 72	Billy Mitchell - 125	Ally Ramsey - 30
Mike Buchanan – 10	Jennifer Fox - 109	Peter Burnhill - 18
Angela Kidd - 8	Danny Fox - 110	Sheriff Ahmed - 215
Chris Alexander -	Linsey Henderson - 7	Dave Harrold - 9
Bill Woodward - 85	Billy Mitchell -	Jabs - 46
Martin O'Donnell - 14	Ant Maley - 308	John Johnstone - 174

Apologies received:

Tich Wighton - 39	Raymond Paterson- 5	Del Sharkey - 7	Jamie Lynch - 17
Christopher Kenmore – 19	Nat Fisher - 20	Stevie Clark - 22	Steven Lynn - 38
Alan Speed - 3	Charlie Coburn – 73	Chris Pullinger - 77	Stewart McLachlan - 389
Jason Cross - 131	Colin Shanks - 161	Brent Finlay - 207	Mary Tough – 208
Gregor Benvie - 212	Aiden Benvie - 213	Phil Zadruzynski - 232	Alan Keefe - 233

1. Welcome and Introductions by the Chairman – Chris Alexander

Welcome to the Arsenal Scotland Supporters Club Annual General Meeting 2024. Thank you to all members who have attended today.

Can I please introduce you to the following:

Club Secretary Angela Kidd - Membership Manager and Home ticket officer Mike Buchanan, my name is Chris Alexander. Club Treasurer Alan Speed unfortunately couldn't make it today.

2. Minutes of the previous scheduled AGM - to be approved

Matters arising:

2.1 The Club Constitution – Angela explained that there was a proposal of the executive committee to formally add Mike Buchanan (home ticket and membership manager) and Richard Wighton (ticket manager/buyer) to the executive committee. Peter Burnhill asked about the constitution and procedure as covered by the constitution which is on the website. The executive confirmed that they would review and propose formally to expand.

3. Charity Proposals

Angela invited members to send any charity proposals to her.

4. Vote for Player of the season – Angela Kidd

Angela proposed a vote by the members present for Arsenal Scotland Player of the Season 2023-24.

Six players were proposed. Bukayo Saka, Martin Ødegaard, William Saliba, Ben White, Kai Havertz, and Declan Rice.

Bukayo Saka	2 votes
Martin Ødegaard	32 votes
William Saliba	6 votes
Ben White	4 votes
Kai Havertz	2 votes
Declan Rice	7 votes

Martin Ødegaard is the Arsenal Scotland player of the season 2023-24

5. Chairman's Report – Chris Alexander

As the season before, we have had a terrific season as both a football club and a supporter's club. I believe we have a huge 2024-2025 season ahead. Some may say (out with Arsenal Football Club), we had the league in our hands however I disagree. What we did achieve was we made great progress in closing the gap on Man City and, although we didn't win any silverware, we were very successful in building the key foundations needed to be a winning football club. We are going into games with more confidence and the determination to achieve great things. Let's hope for a great season ahead for both Arsenal Football Club and ASSC. A huge thank you to all our members and the committee for a terrific season and here's to a great new season.

Angela called for a show of approval of the Chairman's Report.

The approval was indicated by a show of hands.

6. Treasurer's Report - Alan Speed

The Accounts to the Year ending 30th June 2024 were tabled for members to view. These will be appended to the members section of the website.

The funds on hand are £11,918, but I still have one season ticket to pay for. This leaves a balance of about £10,000. This should be sufficient for any 20th Anniversary celebrations that are in mind.

The only thing to highlight within the Accounts is the fact that the subscriptions are half what they were the year before. This is because we got the subscriptions in quickly last year, as the financial picture wasn't so rosy after the pandemic.

Angela called for a show of approval of the Treasurer's Report.
The approval was indicated by a show of hands.

7. Secretary's Report – Angela Kidd

DONATIONS

One of our expenditures was in the form of Christmas cash donations and gifts of selection boxes, etc, covering many local areas in Scotland.

Arsenal Scotland covers all regions of Scotland, and the Reps from each local group were involved in delivering gifts.

Gifts were made to the following:

The Hermeny Education Trust in Edinburgh

Edinburgh Children's Hospital Charity

Paediatric Ward / Ninewells Hospital Dundee

Cash for Kids in Aberdeen

The Children's Unit at Victoria Hospital in Kirkcaldy

Glasgow Children's Hospital Charity

The total donations made was £750 six charities in five different areas.

Usually at this point of the year we would ask for proposals for charity donations however we're not going to do this this year as we are planning to use these funds on 20th anniversary celebrations.

We are celebrating 20 years of ASSC this year. To mark the anniversary of the club we are planning a few events across the different areas.

I have secured a VIP Day at the Emirates on the 31st of August against Brighton. Usually on a VIP Day UK clubs only receive their normal ticket allocations. I thought I would chance my luck and asked if we could get more tickets and we were granted up to 30 tickets for this. Mike already posted this on the socials and asked for members to let him know asap if they wish to attend this game.

I'm also in discussions to have a piece in the match day programme and a shout out on the big screen to mark our anniversary.

We are also giving Edinburgh, Glasgow and Dundee £200 to use in their pubs to buy members drinks and food or if you want to have an event in your pub. I must state this is for members only.

We are also organising a dinner for the committee reps past and present to celebrate and thank them for their hard work and commitment to the club over the last 20 years. I think I can say on behalf of everyone the club wouldn't be where it is without these individuals.

We do acknowledge that there haven't been very many social events in the last year. Gav Glover in Glasgow tried to organise a friendly football match for members but unfortunately there wasn't a lot of interest. Back when I first joined the club 13 years the club was very

sociable, but it doesn't seem to be now. If anyone does have any ideas for social events, please put a proposal together and bring it to the exec committee.

We've had a very good season on and off the pitch this past season however we have had 3 instances where members have not behaved in a manner that we expect. There were 2 issues with drugs and 1 with alcohol. This was very disappointing that our members would put the club at any sort of risk. Each situation was dealt with accordingly however I want to reiterate that the code of conduct is very clear on behaviours that are unacceptable. Anyone caught breaking the code of conduct will be held accountable for their actions.

There was a situation just a couple of weeks ago where someone screenshotted racist comments from Saka's socials into the members WhatsApp group chat. I had a conversation with this member and advised that racist content is also unacceptable. We need to be mindful of people's feelings within group chats. There may be content that you think is fine to post but that could be offensive or upsetting to others, so everyone please remember that.

Angela called for a show of approval of the Secretary's Report.

The approval was indicated by a show of hands.

8. Membership Report - Mike Buchanan

2023/24 was different from other seasons as AFC had introduced a new rule that only members of their membership scheme could gain access to Emirates Stadium for games as well as cutting supporters clubs allocations so the club executive took the steps to lower the membership to around 250 from the 550, we had from the prior season. The usual drop off's from year to year is around 100-150 so in the end we dropped the membership down to 264 members as a lot decided they didn't want to buy a red membership and decided not to renew their membership with ASSC either.

It's been quite a debate regarding closing the membership to new members and that was only between the exec & reps, but the reasons were:

1. It gave existing members a good chance of actually getting to games and not just people who are interested in attending Arsenal matches cause we're challenging again.
2. We had a warning from Mark Brindle at one of the monthly supporter's club meetings that we were to exercise caution with who we allow to join our supporter's clubs as if the tickets fall into wrong hands or are found to have been sold on the club would lose its ticket facilities.

We have had a few people who wanted to be in the club but had their own tickets so we called them social members but due to closing the membership we revamped the social membership to include the ones who wanted to join but couldn't. We had various WhatsApp groups for Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen which was Scottish Gooners not just club members, these groups still run but have now got a Facebook and WhatsApp group exclusive for club members only. The social members can join these groups and are part of the club but don't have access to tickets the view is they will be the ones invited to join if or when spaces become available.

The renewals closed at end of July with 334 renewed the Exec group have decided we will only admit social members and assess these over the coming year as Arsenal have made it clear the ticket situation will not be changing to release any more in the near future.

Home tickets

League	190 tickets
Champions League	49 tickets
Fa Cup	10 tickets
Total	249 tickets

Tickets this year were more restricted due to the membership scheme to get into ground, but we got there. A couple of people had to be reminded that these were Arsenal's rules not ASSC's.

With ticket requests I'll send a text 4 weeks before the game to advise the members if they were successful in the ballot but don't know what section or cost. Tickets can only be invoiced when I receive the tickets which is usually the week of the game.

Club VIP Trip

The club have been allocated a VIP trip to mark our 20th Anniversary which is the Brighton game.

This consists of: meeting the team from the busses (90 minutes before game), wrist band which gets a discount in the club shop afterwards, before the game we will meet a player (we don't get to pick the player), we're getting a personalised match day programme, we will have a special 20th anniversary piece within the match day programme and a shout out at half time.

The members attending indicated their appreciation of Mike's report.

9. Ticketing Report – by Mike Buchanan and Chris Alexander

NEXT SEASON – Champions League football returns once again, and we would encourage our members to think about the group stage games as generally these are low-cost tickets and ticket availability is generally very good being midweek games.

TICKETS AND MEMBERSHIP CARDS

All members attending games MUST carry their Arsenal Scotland membership card AND also their Arsenal Membership card when attending games. Members must present their card when requested by match Stewards. As there is the possibility that you may be refused entry if the Stewards think that you are not Club members.

WHEN TO APPLY

Ticket requests must be made no earlier than SIX weeks and no later than FOUR weeks prior to the fixture date. So, you have a two-week window to sort out your time off work, holiday plans, birthday parties and weddings.

For cup ties you have only three days after the cup draw. That means if the draw is on a Friday for example you can check with your boss on the Monday.

LATE CANCELLATIONS POLICY

Depending on circumstances we will always try to refund late cancellations if we can resell tickets to another member or return them to Arsenal FC. We always consider personal circumstances which have caused cancellations, and we will not be unreasonable.

However, as tickets are so scarce now and other members may lose out on the chance to see Arsenal play, we will 'if necessary' penalise late cancellations with a two month ban on future ticket applications.

It was decided that this point should go to a vote by members present.

The majority voted YES, so Late Cancellation Bans 'may be applied with reasonable circumstances in mind.

HOW TO APPLY

As detailed on the members section on the Website Updated 14/07/23 for all ticket requests.

Only Full (Ticket) Members of Arsenal Scotland may apply for match tickets from Arsenal Scotland. It is now also a necessary requirement to possess an Arsenal Membership.

Home Matches including European games, Emirates Cup, Community Shield or Cup Semi or Cup Finals

Apply by TEXT ONLY to Mike Buchanan

Give your name and membership squad number for verification. And also, your 7-digit Arsenal Membership.

Away Matches including European games

Apply by TEXT ONLY to Chris Alexander

Give your name and membership squad number for verification. And also, your 7-digit Arsenal Membership.

PAYMENTS

ALL tickets MUST be paid **within 3 days** of successful confirmation of ticket allocation. This is to help with cash flow and cash management as the games come along every 3/4/5 days and we must clear payments before moving onto the next game.

ALL payments MUST be confirmed by a screenshot text.

TICKET TEAM

Ticket buying and selling has once again been carried out by Mike Buchanan, Tich Wighton and Chris Alexander over the past season often under pressure due to the number of applicants seeking tickets over the season as Arsenal played so well. I thank them for their continued support

and extremely hard work. Chris added his thanks to Tich Wighton who has built up a great relationship with Highbury House and various members to enable us to apply for as many Away Tickets as we can possibly obtain all through direct issue from Arsenal. This is great work.

The members attending indicated their appreciation.

10. Membership Fees for the season 2024 – 2025 – Chris Alexander/Alan Speed

It was proposed that the renewing members fee **next summer 2024** be reduced as follows.
Renewals £15 adult, £10 Junior (Under 18), £30 family (two adults and two juniors).
Social members £5.

The fees for accepted new members will remain as the previous 12 years.
£20 adult, £14 Junior (Under 18), £40 family (two adults and two juniors)
Social members £5.

The approval was indicated by a show of hands.

11. Any Other Relevant business

Past Chair - Dave Harrold is currently serving on the Arsenal Fans Forum representing all of the Arsenal Supporters Clubs in the UK and Ireland.

And lastly.....It was suggested by the outgoing Club Secretary Angela, that the venue for next year's AGM in July 2025 could perhaps be in Edinburgh. The Chairman agreed with this proposal. The Members present were asked to vote on this.

The approval was indicated by a show of hands.

The Chairman closed the meeting thanking everyone for their support and contribution.

Appendix

Arsenal Fans Forum - UK & Ireland Arsenal Supporters Clubs - Reports of meetings.

For background information there are 4 meetings for Arsenal supporters:

1. **Arsenal Advisory Board**, Supporters Clubs (SCs) are represented by Mick Padfield. The representation from the club is the club senior management team, Chair (Josh Kroenke – I'm not sure if he attends the meetings), CEO, Stadium Director, Director of Communications etc. My understanding of this meeting is for the club to securely discuss matters and get and gauge opinions of supporters. All members of this group have to sign a Non Disclosure Agreement.
2. **Supporters Clubs Meeting**, All affiliated SCs are invited to this meeting, Chaired by Mark Brindle (Supporter Liaison Officer).
3. **Fans Forum**, this group is made up of the different supporters organisation, AISA, AST, Disabled, Overseas, Gay Gooners, etc. I was elected the UK and Ireland SCs Representative last year. Club representation is CEO, Stadium Director, Senior Fan Services Manager, Senior Ticketing & Strategy Manager and any member of staff with expertise for the topic being discussed.
4. **Working Groups**, from the Fans Forum to discuss initiatives such as ticketing (I was part of this group), safe standing, redesign of the stadium exterior, match day experience etc etc.

I have set up a FF WhatsApp Group for discussion with over 30 SCs registered.

Over the past year I have attended (either virtually or in person) Fans Forum on 29th September 2022, 16th February 2023, 27th June 2023. Ticketing Workshops on 31st January 2023, 13th April 2023.

As I am not on the Extranet email list I have not been invited to the SCs meetings, I have asked to be included on this.

Following the European Super League debacle and Tracy Crouch's review of football governance (which recommended greater supporter involvement) all PL clubs were spooked into setting up supporters forums. Since then the Review has been kicked into the long grass the pressure has gone off clubs.

The initial meetings of the FF were chaired by the CEO (Vinai Venkatesham), his appearances at the FF have diminished as the season progressed. The Chair of the FF is now Senior Fan Services Manager, Khali Parsons with the Stadium Director, Tom McCann and Amy Trynka, Senior Fan Services Manager. Plus others with knowledge of the topics under discussion.

I am not sure that the FF will continue in its current form, I get the feeling there will be working groups into particular topics. From my experience on the Ticketing Working Group, I got the feeling that decisions had been made (e.g. all match attendees must have a club membership) and despite my protestations the course was set.

At the last FF I asked if these meetings were consultative or information imparting, Tom McCann said both – I have my doubts. I wrote to Tom about the new match attendance requirements, challenging his comment that SCs were 'ticket hubs' stating that it will mean the decline of SCs, he said he recognised the importance of SCs but disagreed with my point of view. I also voiced my opinion at the FF, again Tom disagreed.

It is clear to me that SCs have been pushed down the pecking order and I have made the point that this is purely a financial decision (again Tom disagreed) and a decision the club will regret when SCs start disappearing.

I would like to have presented a more positive Report.

However, that said I am happy to continue to represent SCs at these meetings.

COYG!

Dave Harrold

10 July 2023