



Overview of our recent member survey

Introduction

As a new organisation it was important that we have a base line of issues from which to prioritise our work.

We recently sent a survey to all of our members and have used this to identify the issues which fans are most concerned about and would like us to address. These fall under a number of headings:

1. Ticketing and match attendance
2. Stadium and facilities
3. Development of Selhurst Park
4. Academy and U21s
5. Club communication
6. Loyalty points
7. What's working well
8. Other

The following is a summary and overview of the feedback received and identifies the areas of concern that fans reported to us. There is also a section for areas that are working well.

This document formed the basis of our first meeting with the club and we went through each section together and all of the comments included. As a result we will be contacting individuals whose comments are included in this overview with specific feedback and the option where relevant to be contacted by the club. We would be grateful if members could check their emails and respond where requested.

You will find further information on the issues raised in the notes from our meeting with the club on 19th December when these are agreed and published.

If you have issues that you would like CPISA to take up on your behalf, please use our "Contact us" page and email us.

1.0 Ticketing and match attendance

1.1 Moving dates and time of matches

This was the biggest area of dissatisfaction raised in the survey. There were a number of reasons cited but most revolve around the need for fans to plan for attending, booking travel and the increased cost of rebooking and being unable to then make the revised date/time and not always being able to get refunds on travel costs. Also moving from daytime to evening kick off can also impact on ability to get back on the same day which means possibly taking annual leave and paying for accommodation.

Whilst there is recognition that this is not just a club issue, the fans feel that the club could/should do more to speak on behalf of fans on this issue with the broadcasters and EPL.

Several people also mentioned 7:30pm kick offs as being difficult to attend.

Comment: "I live in Lincolnshire and have to select games I can attend in advance to book travel etc (I am a nurse so sometimes have to work on matchdays or take annual leave to attend). Not only is it greatly disappointing when matches are switched and I can't attend, but I lose money for travel I've booked."

Comment: "As a season ticket holder abroad, the movement of games by broadcasters shows scant regards for fans."

1.2 Digital tickets

There are still a significant proportion of fans unhappy with not being able to have a plastic season ticket. It is clear this is causing some fans significant anxiety and there is a feeling that fans are not being listened to but rather being pushed down the digital route. Some of the issues are:

- I like being able to give to a friend or family member if unable to go, ensuring it goes to a Palace fan
- People with personal difficulties including dyslexia, struggling with using a smart phone and being able to see if the right ticket is downloaded are being pushed into the digital route despite their issues
- Long distance fan who travels over 3 hours to games being anxious about making sure the phone has enough charge by the time he gets to the ground makes it more stressful to come to matches than it needs to be
- Digital tickets not refreshing on smart phones in time for games this seems to be mostly Google Wallet related
- Issues of access and safety when technology fails and people are trying to get into games
- Some fans suggested they would rather pay a supplement to have access to a plastic ticket
- Some fans have said that they've given up season tickets as the process just puts them off
- It is likely that this proportionally impacts a greater number of older and disabled fans
- Having to use printing stations around the ground as the club no longer attaches a pdf to the email

Comment: *"Getting my 8 year old grandson through the turnstiles is always a gamble. I put him through first using my Google Wallet but since once experiencing trouble following him though when my own ticket then didn't work I am always nervous of a repeat that leaves us separated from each other. There should be a safer more guaranteed way of entering the ground when accompanying a junior such as a steward checking the tickets manually and then operating the turnstile manually."*

Comment: *"Digital update of home games on smartphone often requires workarounds so that the following game appears in Google wallet. The provision of a digital ticket has never been as convenient as the old style plastic card. I have requested a plastic card many times (I am a concession ticket) but this has never arrived despite assurances from the box office."*

Comment: *"I feel the point system is broken and the away ticket issue as well is bad. I'm also worried about the ticket being on my phone, what happens if my phone is stolen, broken or dead, what can we do?"*

Comment: *"Although the problems I had last year with my digital ticket appear to have been resolved (every home match showed Aston Villa as the opponents) there still seem to be too many problems which result in congestion at the turnstiles."*

Comment: *"I have had issues with the digital ticket not working at the turnstiles, which just causes stress. I would much prefer to use a card ticket. My train journey to home games is over 3 hours and I have the stress of ensuring my phone doesn't run out on the way. I missed the Arsenal home game but would have liked to have passed the ticket to a friend, unable to do so with paying extra money so my seat was empty."*

Comment: *"Problems with downloading e-tickets following change to Ticketmaster. Tickets will not transfer to Google Wallet as before."*

Comment: *"I'm a senior and get an old card. My son is dyslexic and struggles with IT on his phone season ticket. Can't we just go back to the old tickets?"*

1.3 Away tickets

There is unhappiness around several areas of away ticket allocation and sales process.

- Difficulty in getting away tickets because of the high points level required
- Families don't all have the same points and therefore it's hard to get tickets
- We are penalising newer fans who can't get access to away tickets as they have less points
- Away tickets going on sale late meaning short notice for fans who may need to plan
- Fans would like details of away games to be published at least 4 weeks in advance
- Club not taking full allocation of away tickets is making it even harder for fans to access away games
- Issues with coaches – not promoted well enough, coaches arriving late at grounds
- Lack of communication with fans around when away tickets go on sale

Comment: *"Away tickets going on sale far too late. Most away game tickets only going on sale two weeks before the game."*

Comment: *“Away tickets being allocated to people who buy points in preference to those who have supported the club for many years. I am now unable to get away tickets to matches I’ve attended for many seasons.”*

Comment: *“ My final gripe with the box office is that the away season ticket sales phase has reduced to being less than 24 hours long. A few years ago away tickets were reliably sold at 10am on a Friday morning. Nowadays there is no consistent day/time as to when tickets go on sale and with less than 24 hours priority access you have to constantly check the official site and emails several times a day to be sure of not missing the priority period.”*

Comment: *“For away games where away end tickets have been digital only, I have appreciated that the box office have had an arrangement for fans to collect paper tickets at the away ground on the day. However, at Man U League game our official coach only got to the ground at 2:35pm and by the time I had collected my ticket at the opposite end of the stadium, I got into the ground at 3:10 after kick off despite having set off for the game very early in the morning.”*

1.4 Other ticketing issues

- Too many tickets in home areas are being sold to non Palace fans including tourists and away supporters.
- Away fans in home sections and stewards are not dealing with this when it is pointed out
- Some season ticket holders are not attending any matches and just reselling their tickets – it makes a season ticket a profit making option
- Difficulties for home fans to get ad hoc home match tickets
- Long waits to access box office and comments about emails not being answered, although in general the feedback regarding box office staff was that, when fans did get through, they were very helpful.
- Away fans and touts purchasing season tickets and other tickets just to sell on

Comment: *“Paid £10 to go on the waiting list for a season ticket but no notification of my application’s progress so far.”*

Comment: *“For the Spurs game there were away fans in the Whitehorse Lane stand and when my friend challenged them he just got abuse and the steward in front of us did nothing. One of the other stewards came over and tried to sort it out but the Spurs fans had disappeared down the concourse. One of them came back later and hit my friend in the face but the steward again did nothing.”*

Comment: *“I am too busy to be able to justify a season ticket so rely on being able to purchase tickets for individual matches. It is proving much more difficult this year to buy tickets compared to last year. Why are people able to sell tickets on resale sites when supposedly only members should be able to buy these? It’s very frustrating”*

Comment: *“Contacting the box office and other areas of the Palace administrative teams is always extremely long winded and inconvenient, with waits of up to 45 minutes a frequent feature. Requests for callback have never resulted in a call back.”*

Comment: *“My son’s girlfriend suffers with anxiety which has resulted in selective mutism. She likes coming to games and we believe it is helping her recovery. As we have season tickets I try to get a ticket nearby so I can give her my seat.”*

Comment: *“Trying to contact the box office for anything is an absolute nightmare. I don’t live locally so I can’t call in and I have been kept on the phone for hours waiting for someone to answer. It’s not good enough for a premier league club to have such a second rate phone system. I must say though when I have managed to get through the staff have been very helpful.”*

Comment: *“I feel it is completely unfair for those who have money to get priority over tickets for home games. I have had a season ticket for 45 years but have to wait until those who have season ticket+ or gold membership. This is not rewarding loyalty.”*

2.0 Stadium and facilities

2.1 Safety

The main/most frequent issues raised were:

- Crowding on the concourse in the Arthur Wait
- Crowding in certain areas of the Main Stand at half time
- Handrails needed on steps leading to seats (Holmesdale)
- Holmesdale road blocked by fans trying to get through the turnstiles makes it harder for other fans to get past
- Supporters allowed to stand on stairs making it difficult and unsafe to access to seats and facilities – all stands
- Tannoy not able to be heard – Arthur Wait and Holmesdale in particular – so any safety messages would be missed
- Turnstiles in Whitehorse lane far too small in width have to go through sideways and if wearing a thick coat people can get stuck

Comment: *“I’d like to see handrails on all stairways in the stadium, especially in the upper tier of the Holmesdale stand. Stewards have told me there are near misses in terms of accidents every week and falls are increasingly happening.”*

Comment: *“Getting into the Holmesdale can take longer than necessary with queues going right out to the opposite pavement it can take several minutes to battle past other queues to get to your own. Sometimes that are inadequate numbers of search stewards meaning that the queues are to be searched rather than the turnstiles.”*

Comment: *“I don’t feel safe if away fans can access home areas of the ground especially when it is a family area and stewards don’t respond to away fans by removing them to away areas.”*

Comment: *“The concourse behind bock C in the main stand is dangerously crowded at half time making it difficult to access toilets and bar. It often feels unsafe to try to cross the area. The queue at the ladies loo is long. I complained long ago about the club reducing the number of ladies loos.”*

Comment: *“Stewarding on the concourse is non existent people smoke and vape there frequently.”*

Comment: *“I believe the upper tier of the Holmesdale is incredibly steep and many fans would benefit from there being some sort of handrails. At many clubs there are end of row handrails which unlike a continuous rail are like curved handles on posts on each row giving less steady fans something to hold onto going up and down the stairs.”*

Comment: *“My seat in block J of LH is constantly wet as there appears to be a leak near the glass. I have reported this several times over the last 2 season with no success.”*

2.2 Access to toilets

This was an issue both in the Arthur Wait and the Main Stand with insufficient numbers being cited by many responders for both men and women. In particular

- Size and number of the cubicles of women’s toilets on the upper floor in the Main stand near the Stanley Stephenson lounge
- Number of ladies toilets elsewhere in the mainstand
- Some comments on number of men’s toilets in main stand
- Comments regarding the cleanliness of toilets and lack of soap for handwashing
- Insufficient men’s toilets in the Arthur Wait

2.3 Getting into the ground easily on matchdays

There are overlaps here with digital ticketing issues, the main points raised were:

- When there were issues with technology for the West Ham match at SP last season there was no plan B. Similar again this season other than rebooting the system.
- Need to have better info communication to fans when issues arise especially those queueing outside the ground
- Need more help on matchdays for fans who are still struggling with digital ticketing
- Need to have better queue control in Holmesdale Road
- More stewards to speed up and improve the quality of searches

2.4 Access to bars and refreshment areas

The same issues came up time and again:

- Length of wait for service at bars particularly at half time
- Difficulty in accessing some bar areas, again especially at half time
- Issues are known but nothing changes

Comment: *“My issue is not so much access to bar and refreshments but the speed of service especially at half time. Service in the Red and Blue bar is much improved this season and is generally good, but service at half time from the concourse bars is very poor. I appreciate the difficulties with a 15 minute window but could easily be managed with 1) more staff, 2) pre pour draft beers, 3) serve bottled (plastic) beer only.”*

Comment: *“Often the queues are so long I just give up.”*

Comment: *“Too much time queueing so I don’t”*

Comment: *“Queues for the bars on the concourses always seem slow moving. As was the case a couple of seasons ago it would be great if there were a couple of stands dotted*

along the concourse serving bottles only. At the moment everyone is forced to queue at the slow moving draught beer bars.”

Comment: “It’s so crowded that sometimes it’s impossible to get a drink. Just have a few bar staff pouring pints before half time. Then one would pick up the quantity required and pay. The layout may need to be changed more like a self serve restaurant.”

2.5 Range of food on offer

There were mostly negative comments:

- Range of food is very limited in terms of healthy options
- Range is limited both in vegetarian/vegan/plant based and “free from” options
- Cost of refreshments is considered very high
- More snacks would be welcome including rolls and sandwiches
- Could we consider concessions to improve the range – would be good to support some local businesses
- Would spend more if better selection

Comment: “Queue for toilets and refreshments especially at half time are ridiculous. Being vegan the food choice is very limited and the cost of refreshments ridiculously high.”

Comment: “I am a diabetic I would welcome something that didn’t include chips or bread.”

2.6 Club shops and merchandise

Female fans in particular commented in this section:

- Some fans not convinced by the 1861 claim and boycott merchandise that is related
- Women’s range is poor and size availability is very poor for larger fans.
- Sizing of clothing is not accurate to other retailers
- Women often to settle for larger men’s shirts and end up with tops that resemble knee length dresses instead of football tops

Comment: “Range of clothing in the club shop for women – honestly it’s very poor and not great quality.”

Comment: “Love the ladies cut shirt, makes such a difference to have a nice flattering cut on a shirt although the sizing for the more voluptuous figure leaves a lot to be desired (last season the size 18 was more like a 14).”

Comment: “Considering the number of women fans these days there is very little catered for in terms of t-shirts/sweatshirts/jumpers/hoodies/hats etc and of good taste and quality. We don’t all want bubblegum pink beanie hats.”

Comment: “Difficult to buy merchandise online due to size difference. A Large in puma is different to a Large in Macron. Price of merchandise is too expensive.”

2.7 Safe standing

- Fans would like to know where the club are with this in all stands not just Lower Holmesdale
- Is this possible across all stands
- There are concerns re what this means for people who can’t or don’t want to stand

Comment: *“They don’t seem to be pushing for this in the stadium, they only seem to focus on appeasing the HF fanbase.”*

Comment: *“Engage with supporters for areas that are being considered for safe standing and fair options for those that do not wish to stand to move to a seated area”*

Comment: *“As everyone stands in the Lower Holmesdale, I’d feel very much safer and more comfortable if we had the safe standing arrangements that are found at other premiership clubs.”*

Comment: *“Other PL clubs seem to be much more advanced in setting up of safe standing trials.”*

3.0 Development of Selhurst park

There is much scepticism as to whether this will happen within the latest timeframe suggested by Steve Parish. Feedback was:

- Communication with fans re development is ad hoc with long gaps.
- There is not enough information coming out from the club about the progress with this and people are concerned that the timeline has slipped again
- Fans in the Main Stand are worried about what will happen and whether they will be able to stay close to where they currently are and with their friends because there has been no clear communication of how the club plan to allocate seats and what priority existing season ticket holders will get.
- There are concerns that cost of season tickets in Main Stand will rise significantly
- Concerns of fans in Whitehorse Lane over the lack of communication re what will happen to them. They are worried that some will lose their seats and that they may have to move to a more expensive part of the ground
- There is nothing to tell fans what the longer term plan is beyond the main stand

Comment: *“Better communication re current and likely future status of ground upgrade for good example see how Bath Rugby keep their supporters up to date regarding their stadium development*

Comment: *“Get the development of the Main Stand started and set out a vision for improving other stands especially the Arfur.”*

4.0 Academy and U21s

Enabling fans to watch home academy and U21 games

- No proper updates as to when the academy seating will happen, many fans are wondering if this will ever be possible.
- Although Sutton is overall seen as a better option than Dulwich, fans would like to see more U21 games at Selhurst
- Fans would like a team sheet to be made available for U21 games at Sutton
- Offer discounts to season ticket holders to increase attendance

Comment: *"I used to go to the U18 games on Saturday mornings. It's hugely disappointing that we are unable to do so."*

Comment: *"Make tickets more accessible as I never know what games we can buy for and which games we can't. Is the academy training ground now open to visitors? If so I don't recall this being advertised."*

5.0 Club communications

- Fans don't feel there are enough meaningful club updates
- Fans would like the club to let fans know what the long term plan for the club is so they can understand what will be happening, not just with the stadium but overall aims and objectives
- Fans would like more direct meetings between fans and players/management/board
- Not communicating clearly leaves fans frustrated eg the refund windows for reclaiming money for resold tickets not everyone understood this and it has left people unhappy

Comment: *"I do get annoyed that Steve Parish mainly chooses to communicate via 'paywall media' such as The Times and The Athletic when his first priority should be communicating with CPFC fans directly ie interviews on the Palace website."*

Comment: *"A bit more engagement with the fans beyond the chairman's notes in the programme wouldn't go amiss - and not just cosy chats with the Fanatics either. We used to have fan's evenings where club officials would talk directly to fans – restoring something like that would be good IMHO."*

6.0 Loyalty points

Based on our survey, this is one of the most divisive issues amongst the fan base. There are concerns that the loyalty point system is broken and needs relooking at. Fans are divided with those who don't do away games wanting points on all purchases both refreshments and club shop/online and those who want to accumulate points for away games who want points only awarded for away game attendance.

Comments: *"Points should only be awarded for buying away tickets not food and drink or merchandise. The other change is that the further you travel the more points you should be allocated."*

Comment: *"Loyalty points have not been awarded for more than 2 years in the Red and Blue and Johnson Bar. I regularly spend over £30 at every home match on refreshments for friends so at a quick calculation that's a minimum of £1140 of loyalty points (38 home games in 2 years x £30). Then add on cup games and other matches for more than two years and I am losing out big time. Please Palace get this sorted."*

7.0 What's working well, what changes have improved things for fans

- The new LED screens and advertising hoardings are particularly well liked with lots of positive comments on this
- The stadium tour is a great initiative
- Palace TV transmission of live games
- Season Ticket plus
- Staff are seen as helpful
- Fanzone

Comment: *"I love the Arthur Wait stand digital fascia that sometimes shows the traditional 'stripes and clock' as I remember it from the 1980s. A great nod to the past."*

Comment: *"Foz who works in the club shop is a terrific employee and has a great rapport with the club."*

Comment: *"The new LED screens on the stands are nice."*

Comment: *"The overall 'branding' of the stadium, the new screen and the screens along the balconies of the Whitehorse Lane stand provide much better and immediate communication with the fans. A good example was the Remembrance Day match where the poppies and other information being projected was great. BUT why have we still only got one TV screen, great for us at the Holmesdale Road end – not so good for the rest."*

Comment: *"Palace TV is an excellent medium and the PR department generally do a good job."*

8.0 Other Issues

- Next year is the centenary year at Selhurst Park and it has been suggested that we have something special to mark this together with commemorative merchandise
- Wifi in the Selhurst Park is really poor

Comment: re getting the money back from reselling tickets: *"I think it's pretty scandalous there's only a 2 week long windows in the year when you can claim money owed back to you, one of these is open now. Unsurprisingly there's been no dialogue from the club about this."*

Comment: *"For the last few seasons I have had a matchday programme subscription, with copies posted to me. Alas Royal Mai are no longer providing a reliable service, programmes no longer arriving in time for match day. Can we please revert to an old style subscription with a book of vouchers."*