

The Lockdown and online engagement

Last year we commented that 2019/20 has been one of the strangest seasons in the club's 135 year history. However, the season just gone was even stranger, with only a quarter of matches played before a further lockdown struck. Consequently, much of the Supporters Club's activity for the 2020/21 season was conducted online.

Through the use of Zoom, our committee have been able to continue meet regularly and have worked with the Club to hold fans' forums to help maintain communication with fans. We have successfully used our on line Club Shop to increase membership, fundraise and sell a wide range of Kingstonian merchandise. This included red and white hooped face masks and snoods; both of which proved very popular. Perhaps most striking is that we increased our membership by 34% from 107 to 143.

The committee's work was enhanced by having access to our own social media channels and the excellent logos and banners produced by Sylvie Bowman helped us to present information effectively, with professional looking presentation.

During the lockdown period, and beyond, Margaret McCormack continued phoning potentially isolated fans. This work was recognised on Social Media by Talksport commentator and QPR fan, Tony Incenzo.

Brian Newman and the Fossil Cup

Last autumn, all at Kingstonian were saddened to hear of the death of Brian Newman and a "Fossil Cup" challenge match was organised by fans. This was held on 11 October held in his memory and this included the production of two special flags. The event was highly successful and over £1100 was raised for cancer research. A rematch is now being planned: at which the players will use new Supporters Club home and away Kingstonian strips.

Fundraising for Kingstonian FC

We continued to provide financial support to the Club through various donations and the totals given comprised:

- £5586.94 was raised through our shirt sponsorship scheme and other fundraising. This included sponsorship of matches and match day balls.
- £10,486 was raised through the 12th Man scheme. This provides ring fenced funding to boost the playing budget

Despite all this, the Supporters Club had a surplus for the year of £1221.33. (See annual accounts for more details).

Club Shop

The Club Shop has recently been given a higher profile on match days through the purchase of a Gazebo style facility and the online shop provides additional opportunities for sales of Ks merchandising, as well as buying Membership and Player kit sponsorships. Thanks are again due to Alison Livesey for running the Club Shop on match days, assisted by Brad and Sandra.

The importance of the online Club Shop has been very apparent during the "lockdown" as it has played a key part in efforts to help us all stay connected. I would be interested in hearing from members with ideas for new stock - email Rosey Wooldridge at clubshop@kingstonian.com. The shop is at <https://kingstonianshop.weebly.com/>

Work with our Community Partners

Our partnership with Mind in Kingston has been hugely successful with numbers of players increasing and we now have three Kingstonian Mind United teams registered with Surrey FA. We plan to hold another mental health awareness day similar to the one held on 7 December 2019 vs Merstham.

We will help support two Young Carers Days at home matches with young carers and their families as guests and young carers as match day mascots for the game. We also have planned two football fun days organised in school holidays, which will now be held at Goals Tolworth.

We undertook fundraising for our charity partners Sparkle Malawi in supporting Adam Thompson's splendid contribution to Sparkle's "Spring in Your Step" with £2100 raised for the charity by Kingstonian fans.

Equality and Diversity

The Supporters Club have supported the Football Club in backing the Surrey FA Football Vs Homophobia initiative through sponsoring a match and have had special rainbow Ks flags made for the occasion. This was carried over from the previous season and eventually held on 30 September against Wingate and Finchley. We have also agreed to sponsor Surrey Pride that is being held in September.

The Supporters Club is also engaged with various inclusive groups in the local community via Social Media.

Future activities are expected, for example, to include support for anti-racist campaigns such as the "Kick it Out" campaign.

We were delighted to be able to announce the appointment of our former player, Adam 'Thommo' Thompson, Equality & Diversity Officer this year.

Developing Kingstonian Youth Teams

In the season ahead, we will work with the Club to support the redevelopment of a youth section of Kingstonian. This will be an integral part of the football club and will be important for our future success. This work will include community engagement with schools and youth groups.

Supporters Club Committee

The membership of the committee for 2020/21 was:

Chair: John Bangs

Treasurer: John Howarth

Secretary: John McCormack

Community: John Bangs

Equality and Diversity: Adam Thompson

Publicity: Tim Wells

Club Shop: Rosey Wooldridge

Women's Liaison Officer: Margaret McCormack

Committee Members: Aidan McCormack and Sylvie Bowman