



Middlesbrough FC
Fan Engagement Plan
2025/26



Introduction

“Middlesbrough Football Club recognises the vital role supporters play in shaping the identity, values, and future direction of the club. Building on our 2024/25 engagement foundations, this plan sets out an evolving and exploratory roadmap for inclusive, transformative, and impactful supporter engagement. It is intended as a living document that will develop through ongoing dialogue with supporters, staff, and community partners.”

– **Neil Bausor - Chief Executive, Middlesbrough FC**

Purpose and Values

Our purpose for supporter engagement remains:

To deliver an inclusive and interactive fan experience that strengthens the sense of belonging, trust and pride across all supporters.

We are guided by MFC’s core values:

- **Honesty & Integrity – Doing the right thing.**
- **Humility – Willingness to learn and grow.**
- **Inclusion – Providing opportunities for all.**
- **Loyalty – Commitment to shared success.**
- **Respect – Valuing each other and our environment.**
- **Teamwork – Working together to achieve our goals.**

Review of 2024/25 Activity

Throughout the 2024/25 season, Middlesbrough Football Club continued to strengthen relationships with supporters through meaningful engagement, inclusive events, and open dialogue. From heritage initiatives to grassroots outreach, the club remained committed to ensuring fans feel valued, heard, and connected.

Key activities included:

• **Supporter Consultation Events** – Via both in-person and online events, fans were invited to help shape a new club crest ahead of our 150th anniversary in 2026/27, and discuss improvements to the club’s retail offering.

• **Open Training** – Supporters enjoyed exclusive behind-the-scenes access to a first-team training session at the Riverside during school holidays.

• **New Under-11 Season Ticket Pricing Category** - Introduced to make matchdays more affordable for young families and encourage the next generation of Boro supporters to attend games regularly.

• **Increased Social Media Content** - A strategic push to boost digital connection between fans and the Club, including behind-the-scenes access, player/staff takeovers, fan features, and interactive content to strengthen engagement and identity.

• **Boro on the Road** – Community events across Teesside brought the club closer to fans, with appearances from players, first team manager and legends.



• **Christmas in the Community** – Hosted festive celebrations including the Champion Children’s party and Afternoon Tea at the Riverside, featuring players, games, gifts, and a visit from Father Christmas.

• **TJFA Matchday (Teesside Junior Football Alliance)** - held during our home fixture against Plymouth Argyle. Celebrated grassroots football on Teesside by inviting junior teams to the stadium in full club colours, strengthening the link between Middlesbrough FC and the region’s youth football community.



- **Watchalong Party, Ohio (USA)** - An international fan engagement event hosted in Ohio to bring together and grow MFC's US-based supporter community, complete with a live-streamed match, club giveaways, and local fan features.



- **Education First** – The club champions a proactive, education-led approach to fan behaviour, delivering Foundation-led workshops that promote a supportive and inclusive culture, with a focus on learning and positive values.

- **Middlesbrough Supporters Forum (MSF)** – Middlesbrough Football Club meet MSF every six weeks, alongside regular meetings with affiliated supporter groups and ad-hoc sessions requested by either party. Minutes are published.

- **Community Impact Events** – In partnership with MFC Foundation, the club delivered wide-reaching events across Teesside to address local community challenges. These included school activations, health and wellbeing sessions, and social action initiatives such as the No More Red campaign. Many events featured appearances from MFC staff and players, helping to inspire and engage local people.

- **Memorial Matchday** dedicated fixture where the club and supporters come together to remember fans, players, and staff who have passed. Includes tributes, minute of applause, and supporter-submitted dedications.

- **Roary's Squad (Free Membership for Under-11)**. New initiative offering free membership to Roary's Squad for children under 11, helping young fans feel part of the MFC family from an early age.

Fan Engagement Strategic Objectives & Key Activity

In line with EFL Regulation R128, Middlesbrough Football Club is committed to consistent, and transparent engagement with our supporters. We recognise the vital role fans play in the life of the club and aim to ensure their voices are heard, valued, and reflected in decision-making processes. Our fan engagement objectives and activities are designed to build trust, strengthen relationships and create inclusive opportunities for dialogue across our diverse supporter base, both locally and internationally.

1. Pre-Consultations to Shape Engagement Structures

Purpose: Co-design future supporter engagement through wide-reaching listening activity/activities.

Key Actions:

- Deliver workshops, surveys, mapping and listening groups from August to November 2025 e.g. supporter sentiment analysis.
- Include Teesside, UK-wide, and international supporters. Factoring in underrepresented groups and digital accessibility.
- Use insights to finalise Fan Advisory Board/ Fan Forum structure, priority areas of focus and consultation calendar.



2. Establish Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs)

Purpose: Strengthen transparency and mutual respect with existing supporter groups through formal agreements.

Key Actions:

- Co-develop MOUs with all recognised supporter groups by December 2025.
- Include sections on roles, responsibilities, communication protocols, consultation expectations, confidentiality, and independence.
- Promote/publish MOUs publicly to reinforce shared commitment.

3. Launch the Fan Advisory Board (FAB)

Purpose: Build long-term strategic dialogue with a diverse, democratic group of supporters (members).

Key Actions:

- Establish four stage election policy – application, shortlisting, interview and election.
- Begin transparent recruitment by September 2025.
- Launch the FAB in January 2026 with clear Terms of Reference (ToR) & Code of Conduct
- Ensure representation across supporter base
- Consult on “in scope” key topics.

4. Amplify Youth Voice

Purpose: Empower the next generation of supporters

Key Actions:

- Create a Youth Panel or integrate youth members into the FAB.
- Collaborate with Middlesbrough FC Foundation, Roary’s Squad, and local education partners to deliver at least two youth-led consultations.
- Use MFC Foundation-led school engagement to widen participation and ensure diverse youth voice input.
- Use digital channels (socials, apps) to capture creative input and views.

5. Embedding Feedback Loops and Transparency

Purpose: Show supporters how their voice shapes decisions and change.

Key Actions:

- Quarterly surveys and focus groups.
- “You Said / We Did” digital and in-stadium campaigns.
- Publish seasonal Fan Engagement Reviews.
- Work with the Foundation to identify emerging issues and lived experiences from fans facing barriers to engagement.
- Head of Supporter Engagement to lead response actions across all supporter groups and internal departments.

6. Involving Supporters – Fan Led Consultation Topics

Purpose: Establish inclusive engagement channels beyond the Fan Advisory Board to ensure all supporters, including those not formally represented, have meaningful opportunities to contribute.



Key

Actions:

- Launch and maintain a rolling consultation agenda that reflects both club and fan priorities. This may be managed in collaboration with the Fan Advisory Board to ensure transparency and continuity.
- Ensure regular inclusion of core topics such as retail, catering, transport, and matchday atmosphere to reflect consistent areas of supporter interest
- Embed a supporter-driven agenda item in every Fans Forum meeting, giving fans a direct voice in shaping the discussion and influencing club decision-making.



7. Flagship Supporter Events

Purpose: Deepen connection through in-person engagement and celebration.

Key Actions:

- Deliver “Meet the Staff” events
- Open Training Day
- Christmas in the Community
- Atmosphere activations and fan/family zone events
- RiverSideBySide initiatives

Implementation Timeline

MOU Development

Start: July 2025
Completion/Review: December 2025

FAB Recruitment & Launch

Start: September 2025
Completion/Review: January 2026

Youth Engagement

Start: July 2025
Completion/Review: Ongoing to May 2026

Pre-Consultations

Start: August 2025
Completion/Review: November 2025

Feedback & Reporting

Start: Quarterly
Completion/Review: Ongoing

Thematic Consultations

Start: September 2025
Completion/Review: Ongoing

Events Programme

Start: August 2025
Completion/Review: May 2026

Leadership & Structure

The appointment of a new Head of Supporter Engagement underlines our strategic intent to deepen and modernise our connection with all supporters, locally, nationally, and internationally, across all demographics.



The Head of Supporter Engagement will:

- Lead the delivery of this plan.
- Support FAB and Youth Panel meetings.
- Coordinate internal departments to embed fan voice into decision-making.
- Commit to updating supporters with any changes to the FEP
- Act as the first point of contact for supporter group relations, consultation, and feedback.
- Work closely with Middlesbrough FC Foundation to ensure joined-up delivery and shared community insight.
- Report quarterly to senior leadership and annually to the EFL.

Reporting and Compliance

In line with Regulation R128, Middlesbrough Football Club is committed to upholding high standards of transparency and accountability in its fan engagement practices. We maintain a structured approach to documenting and reporting our engagement activities, ensuring that supporter interactions, feedback, and key decisions are formally recorded and regularly reviewed.

Including:

- An end-of-season summary and impact review will be submitted to the EFL and shared publicly.
- Supporter input will be gathered regularly and used to adapt this plan year-on-year.

Get Involved

Supporters can:

- Join one of our recognised supporter groups
- Stand for election to the FAB or Youth Panel
- Participate in workshops, forums and surveys
- Email: supporters@mfc.co.uk

Let's shape the future of MFC together, proudly, inclusively, and with purpose

Supporter Group Statement – Shared Ambitions for 2025/26

“We are absolutely delighted to be stepping out along this road of enhanced Supporter Engagement with the Boro. It has always been the ambition of Middlesbrough Supporters Forum to build engagement that is as representative and meaningful as possible for all Boro fans. Working with the Football Supporters Association and Middlesbrough Football Club we hope to allow the fans to have a far better voice.

We are an independent voice, but proud to be part of a united and stronger Boro. It should be exciting times ahead for Boro fans.

Up The Boro.”

– Robert Nichols, Middlesbrough Supporters Forum