



## Notts County Football Club

*The World's Oldest Football League Club*

Meadow Lane, Nottingham, NG2 3HJ

0115 952 9000

office@nottscountyfc.co.uk

# Notts County FC

## Notts County FC – SUPPORTER LIAISON OFFICER

### Outline

In accordance with UEFA policy, Notts County Football Club (the Club) recognise the importance of the role of Supporter Liaison Officer (SLO) to fulfil the following functions:

- To act as a communications bridge between the fans and the club and contribute towards maintaining a dialogue between the two parties.
- To inform fans about relevant decisions made by the club's management and, in the other direction, to communicate questions and the views, concerns and needs of the fans to the club's management.
- To build internal relationships with various fan groups, and external relationships with their counterparts in other football clubs, and with the police and safety officers responsible for the safety of fans where matches are being played.
- To have a close working relationship with the Football Supporters' Federation, and to understand current trends and concerns nationally so that both fans and Club can be kept aware of topical developments.

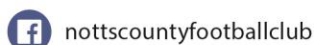
In order to fulfil these duties, the SLO needs to receive good information from both club and fans and to act as a mediator. The SLO has to be an advocate of both sides, to be impartial, and to represent the views of both club and fans fairly, unbiased and without prejudice. Neither club nor fans may be seen to be favoured by the SLOs.

Equally the SLO has to be credible and have the respect and acceptance of both the club and the fans, and external agencies, in order to be able to do their job properly.

Fully effective SLOs have an active role to play in helping to shape club policy and processes and are not there to simply provide a service.

[www.nottscountyfc.co.uk](http://www.nottscountyfc.co.uk)

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### SLO Activities

#### *General:*

Through various means at their disposal, the SLOs are to build relationships with stakeholders (talking to fans, the club's representatives, the police, and the organisations responsible for fans' safety and control).

#### *Between matches the SLO should:*

Be available to both the club and fans for communication purposes.

Correspond and communicate with fans and the club regularly and as frequently as appropriate.

Attend fans' meetings/forums as invited.

Attend meetings called by the club, if so requested.

Visit internet messageboards and, where applicable, join in the discussion, particularly where providing known information can clarify misunderstandings.

Be available for media contact.

Attend appropriate meetings and conferences relevant to the work of the SLO, including meetings with other clubs' SLOs.

Provide fans and the club with regular updates on relevant matters.

Relay to fans, surveys and studies sponsored by the EFL and the FSF for which fans' participation is to be encouraged.

Attend events held by the club and, where invited, supporters' groups.

Attend any relevant training and development courses for SLOs.

#### *Before matches the SLO should:*

Verify official travel and ticketing arrangements. Make sure that these are communicated to fans.

Communicate with police and safety officers so any potential problems associated with that particular game can be discussed and to communicate the general mood among supporters to the police and stewards, to give them the best possible chance of allowing allow a match to pass off peacefully. Attend Safety Advisory Group meetings.

Communicate with the SLO of the opposing club and exchange advice and information to assist both sets of fans to enjoy the best possible match-day experience.

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### *On matchdays the SLO should:*

Through social media and other appropriate means, pass on to fans any relevant information received from the Club that will affect their match-day experience, including travel issues.

Be present among fans, at both home and away matches.

Encourage support for the team by positively influencing fans and seeking to defuse any recognisable tendencies towards violence or disruption.

### *After the match the SLO should:*

Summarise any complaints from fans who attended the match and try to establish the circumstances and underlying reasons for these complaints and any other issues which arose on match-day. Present details to the club and provide any feedback received to the fans.

### **Fans' Safety**

The SLO should be a communicator, not a 'firefighter', and should try to prevent trouble from happening whenever possible by educating, communicating, informing, persuading and engaging with fans. Their aim should be to encourage fans to take responsibility for their own actions. Self-regulation by fans is always the preferred course of action. Should trouble occur despite this, then the intervention of the SLO is over and all responsibility for dealing with crowd disruption and disturbances is to be left to the police and stewards.

SLOs should therefore make violence a taboo and promote respect and tolerance for other fans and for minorities who attend football matches.

The SLO is better placed than the security officer to achieve self-regulation among fans as they are one of them. Supporters are far more likely to trust and listen to the SLO. To maintain this trust, the SLO must treat sensitive information about fans confidentially, and the club has to appreciate that the SLO cannot share all information which comes their way.

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### SLO Personal Skills

*A good SLO should possess the following:*

Good communication and conflict resolution skills

The ability to work as part of a team

Good listening skills and a willingness to try and understand others' points of view

High degree of commitment, motivation, reliability and flexibility

Ability to communicate effectively one-to-one, in groups, and in public

Service-orientated thinking and behaviour

Assured negotiating skills and assertiveness

Appropriate life-experience and experience of dealing with fans; knowledge of, and contact within, the club's fan base

Flexibility (timewise), especially at weekends, and personal resilience

Professional manner according to the situation

Calming, de-escalating, de-emotionalising professional conduct in stress and conflict situations.

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