



SWDFEF Newsletter November 2018

sharing experiences to improve disabled
access and services for disabled fans



South West Disabled Fans' Experience Forum

Member of

Level Playing Field

www.levelplayingfield.org.uk



Co-Founders: Nick Saunders (Exeter City DSA) & David Munn (Yeovil Town DSA)

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T.E.A.M.

Together Everyone Achieves More

Bristol City; Bristol Rovers;
Cardiff City; Cheltenham Town;
Exeter City; Forest Green Rovers;
Newport County; Plymouth Argyle;
Swansea City; Swindon Town;
Torquay United & Yeovil Town



Give us your questions

Plymouth Argyle DSA have suggested that, as an enhancement to our annual Forums, anyone who has a subject that they would welcome input and comments from other clubs, in between Forums, please email them to me at d.g.munn@btinternet.com and I will circulate them. Once ALL replies are received (no more than two weeks after I have raised the question), I will send all input and comments to every club. Thanks.

Or you can use facebook page : - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/DFSAT>

Season's Greetings



If you believe that you have a useless job just think of the German who fits speedometers and indicators into BMW cars!!



happy new year

Yeovil Town DSA

The Colour Blind Supporter (update)

You will have read the complaint from Richard Swaine, who attended the Yeovil v Exeter match on 04 September, which was printed in our October Newsletter. He stated that the kits of both teams looked the same from the back (one plain Green & the other plain Red), so when the players gave their backs to him, he had no idea what team they were. The following is an update to that article:-

1. All parties concerned have been involved in resolving this complaint.
2. THE FINAL DECISION SOLELY RESTS WITH THE MATCH REFEREE.
3. As well as James Hillier (YTFC Stadium Manager), David Mills (YTFC Chief Operating Officer) has been fully involved and has discussed the outcome with Richard Swaine (the original complainant) who is now completely happy with the club's responses and actions.
4. On 06 October Yeovil played Exeter, again at Huish Park. Guess ONE of the subjects of discussion that took place between the clubs!!

If nothing else is proved it shows that YTFC Listen, Hear and Act.

We are speaking to local schools asking pupils to tell their parents and grandparents about the facilities for disabled fans at Yeovil Town in case they would like to attend a game.



Exeter City's new Stagecoach Adam Stansfield Stand

Swansea City DSA

SWANSEA CITY AFC CLUB AMBASSADORS LEE TRUNDLE AND LEON BRITTON WERE JOINED BY CONNOR ROBERTS AND JOE RODON AT THE LATEST DSA EVENT.

Academy products Roberts and Rodon helped bring the crowds in, with DSA vice-chair Jan Burgess stating: "We've got lots of extra people come to join, and I'm sure it's because we've got some local players. "It's an absolute highlight."

The DSA holds monthly committee meetings, with the aim of improving facilities and policies that affect its members. The young Swans stars sung the supporters' praises during the event. Rodon said: "The fans worship the players and we've got to worship the fans back. It's always great to show that respect back to the fans. "It's good to repay the great support they show us and we'll do everything we can to give them plenty cheer about this season."

Right-back Roberts added: "It just takes an hour, two hours out of our time every now and again to come here, chat to the fans and show that we appreciate them."

The event on Thursday 13 September, which featured a Q&A session and a raffle, was Britton's first DSA event as an club ambassador. He said: "It's great to be here with the DSA, and they had some really good questions from a different variety of people, from young kids to the older generation. "It was a really enjoyable night and hopefully through the season as club ambassador I'll be able to work a lot more closely with the DSA."

Cath Dyer (Swansea DSA Secretary)

Editor's Note: - Connor Roberts spent the 2015-2016 season on loan at Yeovil where he made 45 appearances for the club. We have monitored his progress to Swansea first team and now to Welsh full international.

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Swansea DSA Event held on 13 September with members and players

Plymouth Argyle DSA (PADSA)

We had our AGM on 17th October and we were pleased to have our committee re-elected for another year. Our team has had a dreadful start to the season and we are now firmly in a relegation battle.

Our Grandstand is now under the hands of the demolition and builders teams. Everyday we visit we can see a change so exciting times lay ahead.

Our DLO at the club left in September and I'm pleased to say one of our match day Ambassadors has been appointed in that role. The clubs DLO is called Nikki and she will take up the reins in November.

One of our Two porta cabins has been sold, for a small sum, the Toilet block has gone leaving the PADSA lounge which is currently being used as a store. Due to the building works on the Grandstand we have lost a few parking places on match days however the Council have been kind enough to allow permit holders parking in the yellow hatched area outside the Devonport end.

It was unfortunate that we could not attend the Annual meeting of the SWDFEF in Bristol but I was unwell. We look forward to next year in Exeter. Hope you all have a very merry christmas

Steve Helley (PADSA Chairman)

**Exeter City DSA
ECDSA Christmas Draw 2018**

It's Christmas draw time again after a break last season and as you can see, we've some fantastic prizes to be won and we thank all the companies who have donated a prize for their kindness and support of ECDSA.

Our Christmas draws are our main fundraiser and all funds raised helps us to help Exeter City FC to improve facilities for those with disabilities, which makes for a better match day experience.

To make things easier for those who would like to buy tickets please send money for draw tickets to us, please visit our website for contact details <http://ecfcdsa.co.uk/contact-us> and we'll fill out tickets to the amount sent to us with your details (please include Name/email/contact number when sending money) and once done we'll email you your ticket numbers for your records.

Good Luck!

Bonne Chance!

Alles Gute!

Buona Fortuna!

Beir buaidh!

Onnea

CHRISTMAS DRAW 2018

DISABLED SUPPORTERS ASSOCIATION

- * Nissan X-TRAIL Tekna for the weekend (conditions apply) *Courtesy of Exeter Nissan.*
- * Complimentary 4 ball Golf at Exeter Golf and Country Club ~ *donated by Mi Space - Midas.*
- * Director for the Day for 2 at Exeter City ~ *donated by Elaine Davis & ECFC.*
- * Match day Hospitality for 2 at Exeter City ~ *donated by ECFC.*
- * Christmas Hamper ~ *donated by greenmybusiness.co.uk*
- * £100 ~ *donated by Mr. Herniman.*
- * £50 Tesco Vouchers ~ *donated by Signs Express.*
- * Bottle of Champagne ~ *donated by Hartley's Certified Accountants.*
- * £50 Sainsbury's Vouchers ~ *donated by Signs Express.*
- * Signed ECFC Shirt ~ *donated by ECFC.*
- * Sub Vouchers ~ *donated by Subway.*
- * Plus, many other great prizes *

Tickets cost £1 each

Tickets can be purchased from the Club Shop/Reception or from sellers on match days.

Draw takes place on Wednesday 12th December at 'the park' Exeter City Football Club - 7pm.

Can you help us sell tickets? If you can, please contact Nick on 07913 256697

Semoga Berjaya!

Kia waimarie!

Boa Sorte!

Pob lwc!

Noroc!

Held og lykke

Ganbatte kudasai

Yeovil Town DSA

Grimsby Town and Lincoln City mascots set out on an epic journey to visit 92 football grounds in 92 hours for Demi Knight, an 11 year old suffering from Cancer. The article from the Grimsby Telegraph can be found [here](#), where the target amount is £205,000, to enable her to continue her experimental treatment. £81,455 has currently been raised of which £15,205 has so far been raised by the '92 clubs in 92 hours' tour.

The journey took place between 08 - 11 October and they visited Huish Park, on 10 October at 12:40pm. They visited the 92 grounds in 90 hours.

They have two fundraising websites at [Just Giving](#) and [GoFundMe](#) if you wish to donate.



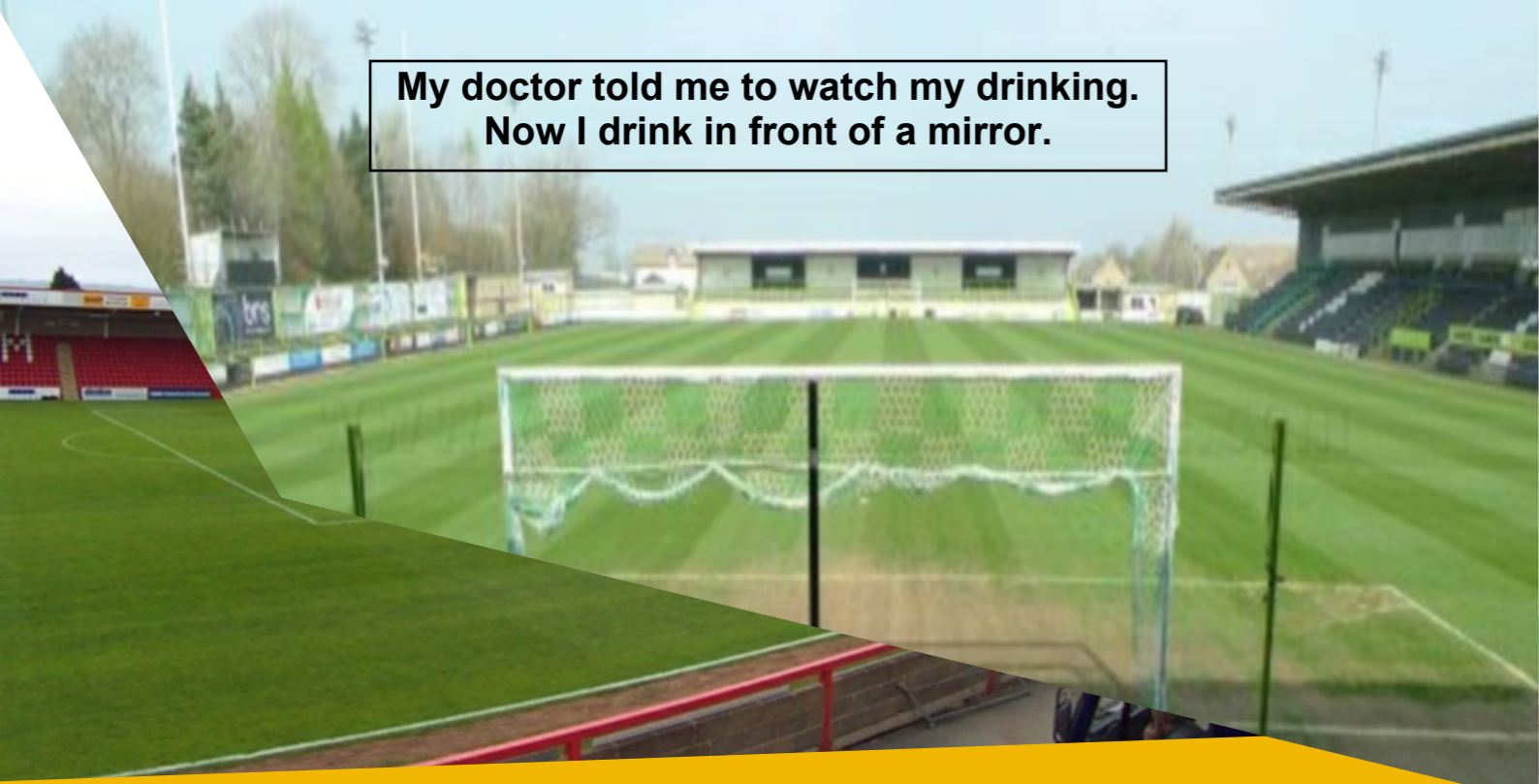
Demi Knight prior to them leaving Grimsby



The Mighty Mariner, Poacher the Imp and James Whaley, with Yeovil's Jolly Green Giant and Dave Linney Yeovil's Commercial Manager, at Huish Park.



My doctor told me to watch my drinking.
Now I drink in front of a mirror.



Exeter City DSA

Disabled Supporters Association reach Milestone

As the Disabled Supporters Association (ECDSA) exceed 100 members chairman Nick Saunders says “this is a huge achievement for our association and a significant milestone which we’ve hoped for since our formation back in 2007”.

Committee member Martin Robertson has led a membership recruitment drive this season to further enhance the awareness of the Disabled Supporters Association through its supporters, club and players. Martin said “everyone here is passionate about providing a really good match day experience for all supporters with disabilities and by increasing membership and undertaking fund raising initiatives such as the Christmas Draw we hope to be able to provide funds to make St James’ Park wholly accessible to home and away fans and have accessible facilities that we can all be very proud of”.

ECDSA has already contributed significant funds this season to help with the end of seat hand rails in the IP Office Stand and providing accessible equipment for the new ‘changing places room’ in the Stagecoach Adam Stansfield Stand. Nick said “there’s still lots to do like improved access to the club shop and other areas at the club but all is looking great with the new build which we’ve had our input on. All this has only been possible with a great Club and DSA working relationship and understand on both sides”. Membership is now heading towards 150 members but before that Martin took time out to present Christine Jenkinson with a bottle of wine in recognition on becoming the association’s 100th member for the first time in a season. Nick Saunders (DSA Chair & DLO)



For more information about ECDSA please visit <http://ecfcdsa.co.uk> - Membership available for just £5.00 per season. Anyone can join us as you don’t have to have a disability and all members are included on the ECFC Priority Group database for tickets etc.

Newport County DSA

NCAFC DSA have voted Pdraig Amond and Jamille Antonio Matt as Player of the Month for the opening two months of the season.



Merry Christmas



sharing experiences to improve disabled access and services for disabled fans

SWDFEF

South West Disabled Fans' Experience Forum



SWDFEF Bristol Rovers 2018 Forum photos



Photos supplied by Philip Lee of Plymouth Argyle



Report on the 8th annual South West Disabled Fans' Experience Forum held at Bristol Rovers FC on 18th October 2018

The Forum was attended by representatives from a number of clubs and Disabled Supporters Associations in the South West including; Exeter City, Bristol Rovers, Yeovil Town, Newport County, Swansea City, Torquay United, Plymouth Argyle.

The Forum started with an Overview of the afternoon's agenda, what the Forums are all about and what we think clubs and supporters alike could be gained by working together, then we went onto Self-Introduction of Delegates.

First presentation of the afternoon was from Bristol Rovers FC - Commercial Manager, Tom Gorridge who updated everyone on the recent physical changes at the club including two new temporary stands, a new accessible club shop, Supporters' Bar and toilets. The improvements had been funded by the club, the city council and club sponsors.

Next up was Ruth Hopkins (NRAC Auditor; General Manager and Head of Access and Development) from Level Playing Field. Ruth reported on the outcome from their recent strategic review and then shared what they were all about and also showcased their new logo and a sneak preview of their new website plus reports on the new CPD accredited training courses Level Playing Field now offers including, Disability Inclusion & Etiquette Training, Disability Access Officer Training, Stewards and Front Line match day staff training and developing DSA Governance Training that will help to safeguard the associations and avoid some of the problems if, for example a committee member steps down at short notice.

The Level Playing Field 2019 Weeks of Action dates have been agreed (2nd March to 17th March) and everyone present was keen to get involved. The theme for 2019 has not yet been decided but there was a general feeling from some of the delegates present that clubs should set their own themes based on the projects that are happening at their own clubs. As always, Level Playing Field sees Weeks of Action as an opportunity to celebrate what's being done well, to share the good work, to inspire more disabled people to attend games and to improve the match day experience for disabled fans.

After the fantastic presentation from Level Playing Field we then heard from Matt Bennett of the Bristol Rovers Community Trust who spoke about Disability Football and engaging with local disability groups. They work closely with Bristol City FC to provide opportunities across the city.

The Forum stopped for a short break and all delegates enjoyed the great sandwiches kindly provided by Bristol Rovers.

Report on the 8th annual South West Disabled Fans' Experience Forum held at Bristol Rovers FC on 18th October 2018 (continued)

The Forum continued with Bristol Rovers Disabled Supporters Association chairman Clive Marshall who spoke about his personal experience as a disabled football fan and how he'd become involved with the DSA. The DSA are currently looking to increase their membership and to get more people involved and Clive thanked the club for its support and the access changes they have already made. The Bristol Rovers DSA was set up around 18 months ago with help and support from Level Playing Field "Working Together".

Next up was Stadium Manager Dave Parker of Bristol Rovers who spoke about the changes that had been made since he joined the club and how his personal experience having a disabled family member and disabled close friend had given him a greater understanding and awareness that made it easy for him to prioritise access. He also spoke about the Access Audit the club had commissioned from Level Playing Field and the action plan that was generated. This had helped the club plan what needs to be done and how some relatively small changes had made a big difference including; new wheelchair user viewing areas, dropped kerbs, access ramps and lights and emergency alarms in all the accessible toilets.

The Forum finished off with some interesting general discussions about what's happening at other clubs including Yeovil Town DSA who are speaking to local schools asking pupils to tell their parents and grandparents about the facilities for disabled fans at Yeovil Town in case they would like to attend a game.

One of the discussions around increasing DSA membership included whether calling them "Disabled" Supporters Associations may put some people off if they don't want to be pigeonholed or categorised. Everyone agreed that good access benefits everybody, not just disabled people.

There was talk about the ageing population and engaging with fans who may have dementia with some of the clubs attending already becoming "Dementia Friendly" having undertaken specific training and the benefits of some engaging with the "Sporting Memories" charity which was also discussed. This led onto a discussion about ageing supporters who may have restricted mobility but want to remain in the seat where they have always sat, despite it becoming increasingly difficult to access it. It was agreed that offering them an alternative easy access seat and having a one to one discussion was probably the best way forward.

We asked all delegates attending this SWDFEF to remember "TEAM" – Together Everyone Achieves More and Sharing experiences to improve disabled access and services for disabled fans.

Report on the 8th annual South West Disabled Fans' Experience Forum held at Bristol Rovers FC on 18th October 2018 (continued)

Ruth Hopkins of Level Playing Field said, "I was delighted to be invited to attend and present at the 8th SWDFEF Forum. I'd like to thank everyone for making us feel so welcome and for giving us the opportunity to provide an update on Level Playing Field. SWDFEF were the first regional Forum to be set up, and with the founders' permission (Nick Saunders and David Munn) Level Playing Field has been pleased to deliver the concept around the country."

"We now have annual regional Forums in the North West, the Midlands, London, Wales, The South Coast and we are currently looking at the North East. They are becoming increasingly popular and we value the opportunity to engage with the groups and to share experience. Thank you to everyone who attends and to the host clubs for their generous hospitality."

We at the SWDFEF would like to thank all delegates for another great Forum and to Bristol Rovers FC as fantastic host and a big thank you to Ruth of Level Playing Field for her presentation and the permission given to use most of their own report on the above Forum.

Level Playing Field's report can be found [here](#).

Next year's SWDFEF will be held on 17th October at Exeter City FC.

Nick Saunders (Exeter City DSA Chair & DLO)

Newport County DSA



County in the Community

Andrew Crofts supporting the [@wouldntchange](#) campaign. They are creating a world where negative perceptions of Down's Syndrome are a thing of the past.

