



MATCHDAY EXPERIENCE FOCUS GROUP

Meeting Notes

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Meeting Notes

The meeting brought together club staff and supporter representatives to reflect on the matchday experience and gather feedback for improvements. It was acknowledged at the outset that the season had been challenging on the pitch, which had inevitably affected fan mood and engagement levels. There had also been internal changes within the club, including leadership shifts, which had disrupted continuity in managing the group. As a result, the session aimed to re-establish direction by using survey responses as a foundation for discussion, allowing supporters to expand on their feedback and share ideas.

A significant portion of the discussion focused on the fan zone and the broader pre-match experience. The general consensus was that the current fan zone falls short of expectations and does not compete effectively with the strong pub culture around the stadium. Many supporters have longstanding matchday routines, often centred around local venues, making it difficult to draw them towards the stadium earlier. However, it was widely agreed that the fan zone itself lacks key features that could make it more appealing, particularly protection from weather, a stronger atmosphere, and a clearer sense of purpose. Suggestions included installing a covered and heated structure, adding entertainment such as live music or games, improving food and drink options, and introducing family-friendly activities. Examples from other clubs, including Brighton, Lincoln and Liverpool, were referenced as benchmarks, with the idea that Wolves should aim to create a multi-purpose space that could also be used outside matchdays. Despite these ambitions, challenges around cost, space limitations, and proving return on investment were acknowledged. The overall feeling was that the club should either commit to a proper redevelopment or reconsider the concept altogether.

The discussion then moved to the pre-match atmosphere inside the stadium. Supporters noted that many fans only arrive shortly before kick-off, meaning that the build-up period is often lost. While the pre-match show formally begins when turnstiles open, in reality the atmosphere only begins to build in the final minutes before kick-off. It was suggested that the club should focus more on creating a defined and engaging build-up during that final 10-minute window. Music, video content and traditional elements like the existing entrance sequence were discussed, with the view that these should flow more effectively and help create anticipation. There was also interest in reinforcing a stronger club identity through music and shared moments, although it was recognised that atmosphere is heavily influenced by team performance.

Half-time experience was another area of focus, though it was recognised that the majority of supporters either leave their seats for refreshments or do not actively engage with in-stadium content. As a result, any improvements would need to cater to a smaller audience but still add value. Ideas included more interactive features such as quizzes, fan games, and structured engagement that continues from pre-match into halftime. While popular activities like youth games on the pitch were well received, there was caution about overusing them and reducing their novelty. However, the feasibility of more ambitious ideas was linked to technological limitations, particularly around connectivity and Wi-Fi.

The concourse experience generated strong feedback, particularly regarding long queues and slow service. Many supporters reported missing parts of matches or avoiding purchases altogether due to the inconvenience. This was seen as both a fan experience issue and a missed revenue opportunity. Suggestions included introducing faster service methods such as pre-poured drinks, dedicated service lanes, click-and-collect systems, or mobile vendors. There were also comments about staffing levels and training consistency. It was acknowledged that infrastructure constraints, especially in older parts of the stadium, limit what can be achieved, but improving efficiency within those constraints was seen as a priority.

Post-match experience was discussed more briefly, with a view that it currently lacks consistency and impact. While music is played after games, it does not always match the occasion or maintain the energy of a big result. There was an opportunity identified to create more memorable post-match moments, particularly after significant wins, by structuring music and engagement to keep fans in the stadium for longer.

A broader conversation explored what the Wolves matchday experience should represent going forward. Supporters felt strongly that the club should be welcoming and family-friendly, while still creating an intimidating atmosphere for visiting teams. It was emphasised that “intimidating” does not need to mean negative or hostile, but rather loud, passionate and unified. Much of this, however, is linked to performances on the pitch, with fans more likely to engage positively when the team shows effort and quality. There was also a recognition that recent seasons have led to frustration and apathy among supporters, which has impacted atmosphere levels.

Finally, the meeting touched on longer-term strategic considerations. There was a clear need for a defined roadmap that outlines both short-term improvements and long-term ambitions. Communication with supporters was highlighted as an area to strengthen, ensuring that any changes or plans are clearly shared. Budget pressures and operational constraints were acknowledged, but there was also discussion around alternative funding methods such as sponsorship. The group itself may also evolve, with consideration being given to how supporter engagement forums are structured and how they connect with the Fan Advisory Board. Additionally, the club’s upcoming 150th anniversary was highlighted as an opportunity to celebrate history and strengthen identity through stadium branding and storytelling.

In summary, the meeting highlighted a shared understanding of the challenges facing the matchday experience, alongside a strong appetite for improvement. Supporters are looking for tangible changes, particularly in the fan zone, concourse service, and pre-match atmosphere, supported by a clear vision from the club. While constraints exist, there is a clear opportunity to make meaningful progress through both immediate adjustments and longer-term planning.

Thank you for reading.



Fan Advisory Board

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