

In Rovers We Trust: Fan Engagement Strategy 2025

Foreword

Welcome to In Rovers We Trust 2025

The 2024/25 season was a positive one both on and off the pitch for Doncaster Rovers. Our promotion and League 2 Championship victory quite rightly took the headlines, but off the pitch Doncaster Rovers also excelled and we're ranked amongst the best in class across the entire Football League across several areas.

Last spring we launched our fan engagement strategy, bringing back In Rovers We Trust as the brand of our fan engagement. Following this, it was mandated that all clubs should do similar and have a clear strategy available for supporters.

During the course of last season, In Rovers We Trust received positive feedback for In Rovers We Trust with our Chief Commercial Officer, Shaun Lockwood was invited to present at both an EFL Fan Engagement Strategy webinar alongside the FSA and was also a guest panelist on the EFL Family Excellence annual seminar.

This document will report on the success of past twelve months, whilst also highlighting areas where we perhaps fell short and how we will rectify that over the next 12 months.

In addition, it will lay out the way forward for fan engagement at Doncaster Rovers over the next 12 months, with once again Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) being set and made publicly available.

Thank you for taking the time to read this document and in the true spirit of fan engagement we welcome your comments.

In Rovers We Trust

Gavin Baldwin

Chief Executive

Co-owner

Welcome

Welcome and thank you for taking the time to read our fan engagement strategy for the 25/26 season.

As part of our fan engagement strategy last season, we identified six overlapping themes that would underpin our approach to fan engagement and In Rovers We Trust.

Those themes were Good Governance, Supporter Consultation, Supporter Experience, Engaging different Supporter Groups, Building Fans for the Future & Being Human

Across each of those themes, we targeted ourselves on some specific KPIs, our performance against those KPIs is shown on the next page.

Over the course of the season it became clear that three strands of work were starting to gain momentum, the development of focused piece of work enhancing the match day experience, the way in which we engaged different supporter groups and a focus on our heritage.

In 2025/26, whilst our six overlapping themes remain, there will be clear focus on those three strands of work as we continue to respond to the needs and wishes of supporters.

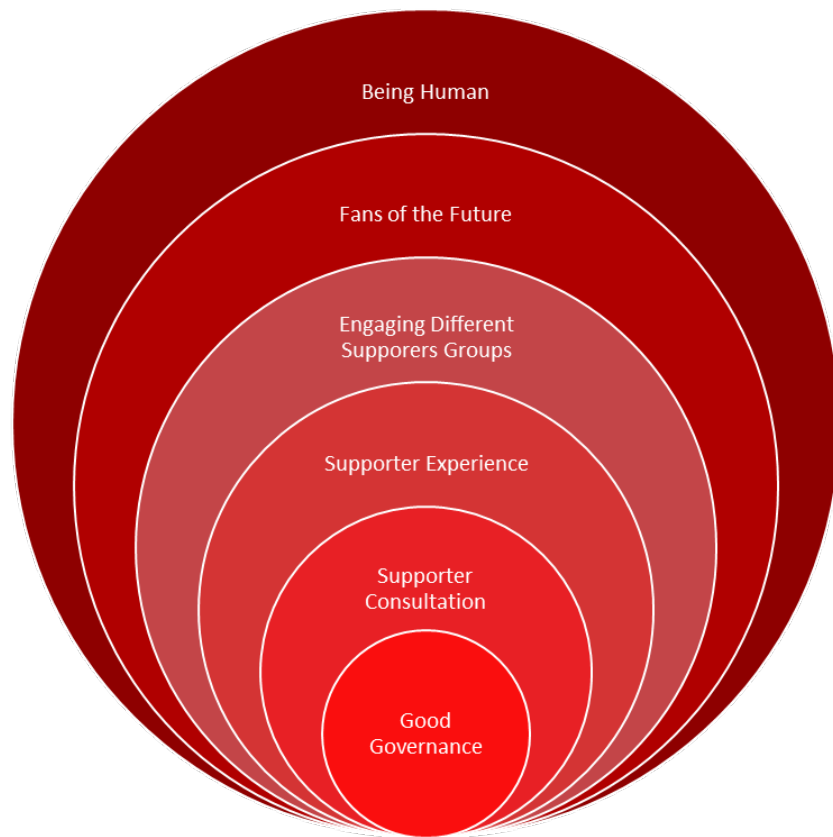
As last year, as the senior lead for fan engagement at Doncaster Rovers, it gives me great pleasure in presenting to you In Rovers We Trust 2025.

In Rovers We Trust.

Shaun Lockwood

Chief Commercial Officer

Our 6 themes of fan engagement



Good Governance

- Ensuring a genuine relationship with the Shadow Board that helps inform decision making
- Independent elections of supporters to the Shadow Board with no club interference
- Memorandum of Understanding with the Supporters Trust (VSC) in place and being adhered to

Supporter Consultation

- Annual In Rovers We Trust Survey with action against feedback
- Fan Forums with open question and answer sessions with club owners and senior executive team
- At least one meet the owners event per season

Supporter Experience

- Post-match surveys following every match with responses used to inform decisions
- The role of the Supporter Liaison Officer (SLO) to remain an independent volunteer position and not taken up by a club employee

Engaging Different Supporter Groups

- Attendance at the various AGMs of our different supporter groups
- Regular meetings scheduled with the senior team and personnel from those groups over the course of the season
- Supporting the development of the IRWT CIC group and their funding and community aspirations

Fans of the Future

- Maintaining our status as one of the leaders of family excellence through the EFL Family Excellence programme
- Developing our Young Fans Panel to help shape the supporter experience for young Doncaster Rovers supporters
- Engaging the community and future fan base through school and junior football team ticketing initiatives

Being Human

- Having personality when it comes to engaging with supporters and not distancing ourselves from communications
- Unique fan engagement initiatives that showcase the values and personality of the club.

2024/25 Our Performance

Good Governance

Has the club committed and met with the Shadow Board six times per season?	
Was the Shadow Board agenda circulated to supporters prior to the meeting?	
Have minutes from the meetings been shared promptly post meeting?	
Has the club followed through with actions recorded in Shadow Board minutes?	
Has the club met regularly with the VSC throughout the course of the season?	
Has the club honored the details of the MOU with the VSC, sharing relevant information?	

Supporter Consultation

Did the club deliver the In Rovers We Trust Survey?	
Did the club share an executive summary of the survey results with supporters?	*
Did the club host a meet the owners event, providing an open question and answer session for supporters?	

Supporter Experience

Has the club undertaken a post match survey at the end of each game?	
Has the results of those surveys been measured and feedback used to improve the supporter experience?	
Have the club continued to use the SLO to engage different supporters?	
Has the club used mystery shops and national survey results to improve the supporter experience?	

Engaging Different Supporter Groups

Has the club attended all AGMs hosted by the Supporters Trust and Supporters Club?	
Has the club met separately outside of those AGMs with representatives from different supporter groups?	
Has the club supported the IRWT CIC with their aims and objectives?	

Creating Fans of the Future

Has the club delivered a schools programme that provides ticketing opportunities to children across the borough of Doncaster?	
Has the club delivered a junior football programme that provides ticketing opportunities to junior football teams across Doncaster	
Has the club created unique experiences for children to provide the best chance of them becoming fans of the future?	

Has the club successfully used its Junior Supporters Club to engage with young fans?	
Has the club successfully introduced a Young Fans Panel?	

Being Human

Has the club successfully showcased it's personality using a variety of initiatives?	
Has the club engaged with wider elements of the community outside of Doncaster Rovers fans?	
Has the club relaunched the Rovers Promise?	*

* The executive Summary will be shared by 1st August along with a Chief Executive Update as part of the new season and highlighting the work undertaken since receiving the survey results

** To be launched 1st August

Highlights

The Shadow Board grew from strength to strength this year with 7 new members being elected before the start of the 2024/25 season. The Shadow Board elections are independent of all club involvement.

Throughout the course of the season the club held several Young Fans Panel events. These events allowed the younger supporters of Doncaster Rovers to shape the supporter experience for young supporters.

The club worked with supporter groups throughout the course of the season, meeting with representatives of the Supporters Trust and Supporters Club. Members of the club also attended Annual General Meetings for the Main Branch and Retford Branch of the Supporters Club.

Towards the end of the season the Black Bank became prominent once again, helping to improve the match day atmosphere, the club supported the Black Bank with its crowd surfer for the South Stand.

In November, along with the rest of the country, the club showed its respects with its armistice day memorials, as part of our match day activity, we invited Ben Parkinson, a local supporters and soldier injured during war to be part of the day and hand the match ball to the referee.

Our Dementia awareness match against local rivals Chesterfield brought together supporters from both clubs, former players and their families who are or have suffered from this illness were invited to the game and the club launched a dementia lanyard. The club also recognised the fundraising efforts of supporters from Chesterfield who raised funds for the family of former player of both clubs.

The club relaunched its family activities on match day, listening to feedback from the EFL mystery shop the club created a family fan park and the Family Pack, offering supporters with young children the guaranteed opportunity to meet Donny Dog, goodie bags on attendance and improved parking facilities.

2025/26 KPIs

Whilst the club will continue to remain steadfast with our commitment to engaging with the our six pillars of fan engagement, our core focus for the 25/26 season will be across three areas of work

Improving the Match Day Experience

- Using feedback from the IRWT survey and match day experience group, the club will continue to make improvements to the match day experience.

Engaging Different Supporter Groups

- The Black Back relaunched towards the end of last season with new energy and a crowdfunder to launch a giant crowd surfer, the club will continue to work with the Black Bank to ensure they continue to grow and build
- The club will also look to support the Womens Supporters Group and put the structure in place to support its growth long term

Recognising our Heritage

- The club will work closely with the IRWT CIC to develop our Forever Rovers project, recognising the history and heritage of the club and honoring those no longer with us who have played a role in the Doncaster Rovers journey.

In addition to the three areas of work above, the club will also take advantage of the unique position we find ourselves in following our League 2 Championship victory. We will use the League 2 trophy to create a new generation of supporters, ensuring every primary school in Doncaster is offered a Trophy Tour visit.

2025/26 KPIs

Good Governance

Has the club continued to host a minimum of 6 Shadow Board meetings, with the main agenda following the main Board agenda where possible?	
Has the agenda and minutes of Shadow Board meetings been shared with supporters promptly in advance and post meetings?	
Has the club met regularly with the Supporters Trust (VSC) through the season?	
Has the club honored the memorandum of understanding with the Trust?	

Supporter Consultation

Did the club deliver the In Rovers We Trust Survey?	
Did the club share an executive summary of the survey results with supporters?	
Did the club host a meet the owners event, providing an open question and answer session for supporters?	

Supporter Experience

Has the club undertaken a post match survey at the end of each game?	
Has the results of those surveys been measured and feedback used to improve the supporter experience?	
Have the club continued to use the SLO to engage different supporters?	
Has the club used mystery shops and national survey results to improve the supporter experience?	
Has the club created a strategy to improve the match day experience, based on supporter consultation?	
Have objectives from the strategy been set and are they being reported against?	

Engaging Different Supporter Groups

Has the club attended all AGMs hosted by the Supporters Trust and Supporters Club?	
Has the club met separately outside of those AGMs with representatives from different supporter groups?	
Has the club supported the relaunch of the Black Bank and its initiatives	
Has the club supported the relaunch of a Womens Supporters Group?	
Has the club supported the IRWT CIC with it's history and heritage days?	
Has the club embraced the work of the IRWT CIC into it's own Forever Rovers project?	

Creating Fans of the Future

Has the club delivered a schools programme that provides ticketing opportunities to children across the borough of Doncaster?	
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Has the club delivered a junior football programme that provides ticketing opportunities to junior football teams across Doncaster	
Has the club created unique experiences for children to provide the best chance of them becoming fans of the future?	
Has the club successfully used its Junior Supporters Club to engage with young fans?	
Has the club successfully introduced a Young Fans Panel?	
Has the club created a Trophy Tour and given every primary school in Doncaster chance to engage?	

Being Human

Has the club successfully showcased its personality using a variety of initiatives?	
Has the club engaged with wider elements of the community outside of Doncaster Rovers fans?	
Has the club relaunched the Rovers Promise?	