



BRETFORD FC NEW STADIUM EVENTS FOCUS GROUP

07/03/2019 – The Hive Griffin Park 6-8pm

REPRESENTNG BRETFORD FC:

Nity Raj, Director, James Parkinson, Commercial Director, Ryan Murrant, Fan Engagement Manager, Kirsty Rice, Farewell Griffin Park Project Manager, Sally Stephens, Transition and Projects Director

7 supporters plus members of BIAS attended.

MEETING NOTES

Kirsty Rice started the meeting with some initial thoughts on key dates and plans for Farewell Griffin Park and the opening of the new stadium but stressed that the plans are still being developed and are open for discussion. At the moment we are expecting to have 3 test events to help secure our safety certificate prior to an Official Opening Ceremony event (likely to be a pre-season friendly match in early August – hopefully against a high profile team).

The test events will need to be scoped and agreed with the Safety Advisory Group which we are working to do over the coming months.

Suggestions for the Official Opening Ceremony

- We need to consider whether a Sunday event would make it easier to get VIPs along – and TV coverage (should we want that).
- Having the opening event as a friendly match rather than an EFL/PL match gives us more control over the events.
- Who will open the stadium? At West Ham it was royalty but the fans need to decide.
- Could we do something with FC Midtjylland (FCM) – it would be good but their season is well underway by then so could be difficult.
- What about a Spanish team if their season starts later?
- It should be a competitive match rather than a big Club bringing along their reserve team.
- Could we bring along an all-star legends team (if not for the main match at least for a warm-up match)?
- It will be important to reach out and appeal to local people who may not have been to watch Brentford before. Curiosity will bring people in but it will need proactive marketing.
- Could we involve London Irish in a double header? (It may be too difficult given different markings on the pitch but it would be good to have them involved in some way).
- Establishing new rituals (and keeping old ones) will be key from the first opening match.
- We need to ensure good communication about how to find your seat and where things are – especially at the first few events and once the new season starts.

Leaving Griffin Park

- How we leave GP is as important as what we bring to the new stadium. Can we have some linkage between the two events?
- Do we have a march from the old stadium to the new? Maybe a walk from each pub. Perhaps to raise money for CRY? Could this be incorporated into one of the test events so that the stadium (or part of it) is open? Does it work to be after the last match or will people want to stay and reflect for a while at GP?



- Can we come up with a physical symbol that travels from GP to the new stadium – a section of turf, the last ball, the Trotta cross bar?
- Could we take along a GP time capsule with key items contained within it to be kept at the new stadium?
- Will we fix the 'last match' as the last League game (even if we are involved in the play-offs?)

Music at the new stadium

- Could we do something different and have a choir and reach out to the classical audience?
- Abide with me should definitely feature if we use a hymn.
- Hey Jude has to be a big part of the music – and Celebrate.
- Richard Archer from Hard-Fi is already working with the Club so we could ask him if he is able to get involved in some way.
- There are other famous people from the music industry who are fans that we could reach out to e.g. Rhino Edwards from Status Quo and Nick Lowe. (Gareth Gates has also been to several matches).
- Could there be a link up with Corrupt FM?
- We need to ensure that the sound quality is excellent – with qualified sound engineers involved.

Entertainment at the new stadium (other than the football!)

- We will need some new pre-match entertainment to encourage people to come to matches earlier.
- We will have lots of screens in the bowl that can help to share key messages.
- Will we look at doing a documentary along the lines that Sunderland have done recently? It would be great to do something that can be cut for matchdays that captures the last season. We could have a red carpet premiere perhaps at the new stadium in the Sports Bar?
- We could use historic clips but weave that in to a welcome to the new stadium.
- It would be great to incorporate fan content too, which works really well if we get it right e.g. sharing fans' videos of them celebrating goals scored.
- We need to make sure that what we do is right for the audience (and for Brentford) e.g. 'Fan Cams' could possibly work in the Family Area, but probably wouldn't be right for the rest of the stadium - fan interviews might work better in other parts of the stadium.
- Can we do more content around the B-Team and make their players higher profile. If we use them in the right way the content could be great.

Merchandise and offers

- We will have pricing on digital screens so there could be an opportunity for some early discounts on food and drink perhaps to encourage people to the ground earlier?
- We need to be competitive to nearby pubs and restaurants. We don't want fans to be ripped off at the stadium.
- Will there be flags or things at the first match, surf flags etc? Will we have cards for people to hold up? Whatever we do needs to be right for Brentford and should be decided by the fans – flags/cards etc may not feel right.
- Scarves would work well, people wear them and they last. We don't want clappers!



Test events

- These haven't been agreed with the Safety Advisory Group as yet. No decisions have been taken on whether fans would need to pay to attend test events.
- The first event is likely to involve 2-5,000 people, then 8-10,000 and the biggest event is likely to be 12-15,000 people.

Other events/suggestions

- Can we do more to appeal to the Scandinavian audience we have at Brentford?
- Perhaps we could hold an International Day at some point? Maybe give reduced prices to international visitors?
- There may be a way to target international visitors through targeted Facebook advertising perhaps? (Targeting through the app was discussed but is reliant on fans opting in to sharing).
- We should start to expand the data we gather and how we use it to monitor growth areas.