



**DUNFERMLINE ATHLETIC
DISABLED SUPPORTERS' CLUB**

East End Park, Halbeath Road, Dunfermline KY12 7RB

Report & Accounts

1 April 2020 - 31 March 2021

**Dunfermline Athletic Disabled Supporters' Club
is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation, Registration Number SC048550**

Trustees' Report for the Year Ended 31 March 2021

1 HISTORY and BACKGROUND

Dunfermline Athletic Disabled Supporters' Club (DADSC) was set up in 2007 to organise travel to away games and to give disabled supporters of Dunfermline Athletic a voice, and after a few years where activity was limited, the Club was revived in 2016.

Since 18 July 2018 DADSC has been a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO), Registration No **SC048550**. This Trustees' Report covers the period from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.

Although DADSC and Dunfermline Athletic FC Ltd share a common interest in the activities of Dunfermline Athletic FC (DAFC), DADSC is completely independent of the football club, with its own constitution and governance run by Trustees who are all long-term Pars supporters.

2 GOVERNANCE

At 1 April 2020, the Charity Trustees and office-bearers were as follows, with the office-bearers elected from among themselves, and therefore forming

Chair: Dave Nugent

Treasurer: Roger Hyde

Secretary: John Simpson

Membership Secretary: Timothy Curle

Trustee: Tracey MacFarlane

In accordance with the DADSC Constitution, an Annual General Meeting was held on 26 October 2020, at which the five Charity Trustees above were elected unopposed. In addition, Nicola Campbell was elected unopposed to be a Charity Trustee, and from that date these six individuals therefore formed the Board of Dunfermline Athletic Disabled Supporters' Club SCIO. The office-bearers were reappointed with no change to those shown above.

3 MEMBERSHIP

Membership of DADSC is not restricted to those with a disability and is open to anyone who sympathises with DADSC's aims. At 1 April 2020, 81 individuals were members, and by 31 March 2021 this had increased to 90, although a few were in arrears with their annual membership payments. Unfortunately this has meant that DADSC's revenue from membership payments declined significantly from last year (£260 down to £195).

At least two DADSC members are known to have died during 2020/21, and both are sadly missed. Kenny Cowan had been instrumental in setting up some of the DAFC supporters clubs and was involved from the start in DADSC's attempts to improve access to the First

Floor. In July 2019 he was appointed as DAFC's Disability Access Officer, a position he was proud to hold until his death. Bob Lawson was also a long-term Pars fan along with his wife Avril, and latterly they shared with Kenny the viewing platform in the Norrie McCathie Stand as age and infirmity took their toll on Bob. DADSC extends sympathy to their families and loved ones.

It was agreed at the Annual General Meeting on 26 October 2020 that the annual membership fee should remain unchanged at £5.

4 ACTIVITIES OF DADSC

4.1 COVID-19 Pandemic

Towards the end of 2019/20 it had become clear that the Covid-19 pandemic was going to affect every aspect of life and society, and that the ability of DADSC to raise funds and to carry out its charitable objectives would be severely curtailed. In the event, restrictions of one sort or another continued throughout 2020/21 and this is reflected in this report and in the associated Financial Statement.

4.2 Accessibility

DADSC appreciates the work done by DAFC over the years to improve accessibility at East End Park, and a few years ago East End Park was ranked as the best stadium in Scotland for disabled supporters. While overall the stadium still rates highly, other clubs have since improved their own facilities and DADSC believes strongly that further improvements at East End Park are both desirable and achievable - the whole of the Main Stand first floor is inaccessible to anyone in a wheelchair or with mobility difficulties, and there are similar access problems in other parts of the Main Stand as well as elsewhere in the stadium, notably the North Stand.

DADSC supplied detailed and costed proposals to DAFC in October 2018 (access to First Floor) and in August 2019 (toilet accessible from Purvis Suite), and it remains DADSC's objective to fund the overwhelming bulk of these improvements following agreement with DAFC. DADSC would also like to discuss with DAFC the recommendations of the November 2019 external Disability Access Report and Audit insofar as they affect disabled supporters.

In fairness, the pandemic affected the finances of all football clubs including DAFC, with no supporters attending matches throughout 2020/21. This added significantly to the usual uncertainty that all football clubs face about their financial futures based on league standings, and placed extra demands on the time and focus of football club directors. In addition (although it was not public knowledge during 2020/21), the DAFC Board was heavily involved throughout the year in seeking new investment, eventually resulting in the July 2021 agreement that DAFC Fußball GmbH would assume a controlling ownership of DAFC Ltd on the payment of two tranches of investment.

In the light of these extraordinary demands on the DAFC Board's time, it is perhaps understandable that no progress was made during 2020/21 in discussing DADSC's proposals for improving accessibility at East End Park. However, the new directors of DAFC Ltd appointed following the agreement with DAFC Fußball GmbH have since indicated their willingness to meet DADSC and discuss the proposals, a development welcomed by DADSC.

4.3 Events and Fundraising

Towards the end of 2019/20 the financial year the start of the Covid-19 pandemic had already made it impracticable to hold fundraising events, and this did not improve during 2020/21, particularly as several DADSC members are in the more vulnerable categories. Similarly, DAFC events where DADSC would have had a presence (Open Day, Player of the Year Awards etc) did not take place, and there were significant efforts at the start of the year by the Pars Supporters Trust and others to raise money to help DAFC directly, making it impracticable for DADSC to appeal to Pars supporters for donations. The year was therefore mainly one of consolidation for DADSC, although a few initiatives were undertaken.

Recognising the increased social isolation brought about by the restrictions of the Covid-19 pandemic, DADSC member Kenny Mclachlan hosted a number of Zoom videoconferencing Chat Nights where participants could talk about matters of common interest. Although those who attended enjoyed and appreciated them, the numbers gradually dwindled as opportunities for social interaction increased, so the project was discontinued.

As reported last year, DADSC had been chosen to benefit from the Co-op Local Community Fund for the year from October 2019 until October 2020, and this proved to be DADSC's main source of income in 2020/21, with £2685.13 received in two tranches. DADSC is very grateful to the Co-op for this contribution, although unfortunately the Covid-19 pandemic prevented DADSC from engaging in the joint activities which were planned.

The DADSC easyfundraising scheme, which provides an income to DADSC from online purchases at no cost to the purchaser, also proved very successful with £519.50 coming to DADSC at no cost to the individual online purchasers (although it should be noted that much of this came in the form of direct donations from Pars supporters and others.) A similar scheme for purchases from Amazon (Smile) was also set up, with £38.99 being paid to DADSC.

DADSC also received £125 from the DAFC.NET Prediction League, thanks to the generosity of the owners of dafc.net and Squeal-a-Deal.

Towards the end of 2020/21 DADSC set up a "Cash in the Attic" scheme whereby unwanted goods from people's garages, attics etc could be donated to DADSC and then sold online. This proved popular and is continuing to earn significant amounts for DADSC.

Individual donations to DADSC are an essential part of DADSC's ethos that those in need should be helped by those who can afford to do so, and a number of individual donations were made during the year, for which DADSC is very grateful. Some of these are listed individually in Note 1 to the Financial Statement, but others are included in the "Easyfundraising" figure, as that was the portal used for payment. Whether shown individually or not, DADSC is hugely appreciative of the generosity shown. The Government recognizes the value of charitable giving through the HMRC Gift Aid scheme which increases the value of most donations by 25% (subject to UK income tax declarations) and as a result DADSC received £307.84 from HMRC in respect of donations in previous financial years.

4.4 Awareness

As with other activities, the cancellation of events and social restrictions due to the Covid-19 pandemic affected DADSC's ability to increase awareness of disability issues among football supporters and in the community at large. However, the DADSC Facebook page continued to be well-received, with over 1000 followers, and each day a new meme was published by DADSC, aimed at increasing public awareness of issues around disability and accessibility.

One major achievement of DADSC was to participate in the 2021 Week of Action run throughout Europe by CAFE (Centre for Access to Football in Europe). Through funding from CAFE, DADSC was able to sponsor the Dunfermline Athletic v Greenock Morton match on 13 March 2021, and to produce (with the help of Craig Brown and Jordan Burt of DAFC and ParsTV) a very well-received video – still available on YouTube – setting out what DAFC and DADSC do for disabled supporters. DADSC members also chose the Man of the Match!

4.5 Co-operation

DADSC is delighted that DADSC member Eddie Martin has developed several worthwhile initiatives in his role as DAFC's Mental Health Ambassador, and these have been publicised by DADSC through social media. In particular, Eddie has established worthwhile links with a number of local organisations such as The Samaritans and others to pursue common goals.

Similarly, Graham Ross (who replaced Kenny Cowan as DAFC's Disability Access Officer, has been very pro-active in his role, playing a big part in the CAFE Week of Action mentioned above and also developing links with local organisations and the DAOs of other clubs.

On the national front, there has been little progress in reviving the fortunes of the Scottish Disabled Supporters' Association (SDSA). Only four DSAs (Celtic, Dunfermline, Rangers and St Johnstone) responded to an invitation to discuss how best they could come together to discuss common issues with the SFA and SPFL, so in the absence of any national organisation it is effectively being left to individual DSAs to conduct their own discussions. To some extent the problem is lessened by the enhanced status and national organization of Disability Access Officers (DAOs) although a DAO is an officer of the football club, not of the DSA.

DADSC is also a member of the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (No 5197).

Further afield, DADSC has an excellent relationship with CAFE (Centre for Access to Football in Europe) and the expectation is that DAFC and DADSC will participate in future events such as the 2022 Week of Action.

5 INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

DADSC is pleased to report that Alan Hogarth MCIBS has again been willing to act as Honorary Independent Examiner for DADSC, and he has signed off the Financial Statement for 2020/21 which forms part of this Trustees' Report and Accounts.

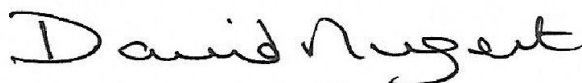
6 SUMMARY

2020/21 was a difficult year, not just for DADSC but for every part of society due to the ongoing effect of the Covid-19 pandemic - the specific issues of Scottish football and of DAFC in particular simply added to the mix.

As at the end of 2020/21 there remained continuing uncertainty about if, how or when full accessibility to the function suites on the 1st Floor at East End Park can be achieved, as directed by the DAFC Supporters' Council in 2014. DADSC is resolved to continue its efforts to reach agreement with DAFC and the stadium owners on a solution acceptable to all parties.

Despite it all DADSC remains in a strong position financially and is on course to achieve its initial target figure of funds raised for access to the 1st Floor (£55,000), although it is recognized the actual figure needed may turn out to be higher, due to the passage of time since the target was set. Meanwhile, as far as is practicable DADSC will continue with its work to improve the matchday experiences of disabled supporters of DAFC and to increase awareness of disability matters generally among football supporters and in the wider community.

Signed on behalf of the Trustees



[Dave Nugent], Chair

31st October 2021