

# think fe

## fan engagement index

"The most reliable and objective ranking of fan engagement in English football"

### Fan Engagement Index scoring system (algorithm)

#### How the Index works, and how we collect the data

All of the data we collect for the Fan Engagement Index are publicly available, via club, league and other websites and sources. It involves no surveying of fans or others. We do not contact clubs directly during the process, to as closely as possible mirror the journey of a fan attempting to find out the information themselves, and to ensure fairness to all clubs.

However, from 2019/2020 season, we do send a copy of what has been collected for each club, and invite them to provide comment, further information, clarification or make any changes on what we've collected.

Each club can achieve a potential total score of 240 points, with 80 points available per-season. Where scores are equal, the highest Dialogue score determines the club's final position in the table. All scores relate to Fan Engagement only.

**All of the data we collect for the Fan Engagement Index are publicly available**

**The way we research the Index mirrors the journey of a fan, trying to find out about fan engagement at their club**

To ensure that the Index remains as relevant as it can be for football, we periodically update or clarify elements of the criteria. This ensures that we can take into account new initiatives such as Fan Advisory Boards or Fan Engagement Plans, whilst ensuring that we continue to reflect practice across the now 116 clubs that the Index covers from season 2024/2025.

We're always interested in hearing from clubs, practitioners, fans and others about their views on fan engagement, so get in touch if you want: [hello@fanengagement.net](mailto:hello@fanengagement.net)

**Each club can achieve a potential total score of 240 points, with 80 points available per-section. Where scores are equal, the highest Dialogue score determines the club's final position in the table. All scores relate to Fan Engagement only.**

Clarifications or minor changes to reflect changes in practice have been made and are included in the relevant section.

If a form of engagement is established during a season, the club still receives full points. However, if either the min. two meetings threshold hasn't been reached, or fewer meetings have been reported, they only receive partial score for transparency.

## Dialogue

Element of Fan Engagement	Criteria	Max Points	Guidance notes	Previous clarifications/changes
Structured Dialogue with supporters' trust/independent supporters group	Where the representatives or directors of fans from an independent group. e.g. supporters' trust, meets with the senior management/owners of the club regularly. This should be separate from any relationship via an FAB or other body. It can also be underpinned by either a shareholders agreement, other similar legal agreement, or Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU)	30	According to the definitions of the DCMS Expert Working Group on Supporter Ownership and Engagement (2017). Definition of 'independent group' is provided by Think Fan Engagement in glossary of terms	The expectation is that this relationship is separate & distinct from any representation on an FAB or other element of structured dialogue.
Structured Dialogue with wider group of representatives	Where representatives of fans of more than one group meet with the club on a regular basis. This can be a Fans Parliament (sometimes known as 'supporters' board') or the new Fan Advisory Boards.	15	According to the definitions of the DCMS Expert Working Group on Supporter Ownership and Engagement (2017). Definition of 'independent group' is provided by Think Fan Engagement in glossary of terms	Where a fans parliament still exists alongside an FAB/Shadow Board, only one is scored for structured dialogue. The other is scored under 'other dialogue' section.

Fans Forums	Where a wide group of fans as individuals (including season ticket holders, members or unaffiliated fans) meet with the club on a regular basis; If the meetings are only once a season, score is 5 points; if the meetings are restricted to a specific category of fan (Season Ticket holders, or membership schemes), even if more than one held, or charged for, score is 5 points.	10	According to the definitions of the DCMS Expert Working Group on Supporter Ownership and Engagement (2017). Definition of 'independent group' is provided by Think Fan Engagement in glossary of terms. For clarification, we use EFL Rule 128 as the standard for the frequency of Supporter Engagement meetings: 'Clubs shall hold at least two meetings/fans forums per Season to which its supporters (or representatives) are to be invited in order to discuss significant issues relating to the Club.'	1. EFL Rule 128 as a standard for minimum frequency of meetings. 2. If club claims to put on two or more a season in charter/fan engagement plan, full points scored. If it's not specific about being for all fans, one is scored for. If reports exist for more, the maximum score can be given.
Social Media (Twitter Help Channel)	Club provides a standalone 'Help' channel, or SLO (Supporter Liaison Officer) Twitter channel, which is clearly regularly used. If it isn't regularly used for Dialogue, score is 5 points	20	Help' Channels include those run by 'supporter services' departments/teams. SLO channels have to be run by the SLO.	SLO and Help Twitter channels now receive full points. More definition of Help and SLO channels provided
Other Engagement/Dialogue	Additional points available for a club providing a distinctive or alternative structures or forums for fans to engage with the club. Includes regular, ongoing programmes, or be attached to a specific or discreet project (e.g.: ground redevelopment or communications strategic work)	5	Examples are clubs responding to queries via main club Twitter channel (or senior officials, e.g. CEO/Chair/owners doing so), or a series of focus groups, meetings or other regular forms of engagement carried out by the club.	
<b>Section total</b>		<b>80</b>		

## Governance

Element of Fan Engagement	Criteria	Max Points	Guidance notes	Previous clarifications/changes
Supporter representatives on the board of the club	An independent group of fans (e.g. supporters' trust) has the majority of the directors (25 points); 2. Where an independent group of fans (e.g. supporters' trust) has at least one full director (and up to an overall minority of directors) representing fans, or an independent director representing fans is elected, (15 points); 3. Where an independent group of fans (e.g. supporters' trust) has a representative on the board (not a full director), e.g. supporters' trust, score is (10 points)	25	Definition of 'independent group' is provided by Think Fan Engagement in glossary of terms	Scope of directors representing fans widened to include those elected by fans of the club in a ballot, e.g. Northampton Town.
Customer Charter or Fan Engagement Plan	The customer charter or Fan Engagement Plan has clear information about consultation and communication, and SLO and/or supporter services (or similar), score is (20 points); Where the charter or plan is missing some information about consultation and communication, SLO and/or supporter services (or similar) or is difficult to find, score is (10 points); Where the charter or plan is missing, or is easy to find but has no information about consultation and communication, and SLO and/or supporter services (or similar), score is (0 points).	20	Customer Charters are mandated by The EFL and Fan Engagement Plans are mandated by The Premier League.	Criteria expanded to include Fan Engagement Plans (FEPs), as customer charter requirement no longer exists in PL rules, and FEPs provide a near equivalent and should contain the right information. Named SLOs in Charter/FEP no longer necessary for full score.

SLO is clearly a stand alone role	SLO (Supporter Liaison Officer) is clearly a stand alone role, with no other different responsibilities attached (e.g. ticketing, marketing, but excluding supporter services roles), (15 points); 2. Unclear whether SLO is a stand alone role as above, score is 5 points (points); 3. Clear that SLO is not a stand alone role as has other, differently and conflicting roles attached, (0 points).	15	All according to the best practice issued by UEFA, and overseen/written by Football Supporters Europe/SD Europe	
MOU or or other legal agreement with supporters' trust or other independent group governing relationship	Club is owned by its supporters via an independent, democratic group, e.g. a supporters' trust or is itself a similar model (e.g. Company Limited by Guarantee with democratic elections) (20 points); an independent, democratic group, e.g. a supporters' trust has supporter-directors or a supporter representative with an MOU underpinning the relationship with their club (15 points); Where a such a group has an MOU or other legal agreement underpinning the relationship with their club (10 points); No MOU or legal agreement, or MOU or legal agreement relating to a different form of dialogue, e.g. between an FAB and the club (0 points)	20	MOUs are promoted by the Football Supporters Association, and adopted by supporters' trusts. 'Golden Shares' can be included only if the agreement can be scored under the section 'MOU or or other legal agreement with supporters' trust or other independent group.' Only one agreement can be scored.	Definition clarified to include CLG football clubs or similar models of democratic ownership; Guidance clarified to include the following: 1. They do not include MOUs that establish FABs or other structures of dialogue, which are entirely separate arrangements; 2. Clarification on Golden Shares.
<b>Section total</b>		80		

## Transparency

Element of Fan Engagement	Criteria	Max Points	Guidance notes
Structured dialogue meetings with supporters' trust/independent group reporting	Full report, minutes, video or audio of meeting (15); minimal report, e.g. short news item (10); Irregular reporting (posting fewer reports than meetings) (5); No reporting (0)	15	AGM reports for fan owned clubs are scored full marks. Reports have to be regular and published for full marks. Can be via OS or Trust/Group website.
Structured dialogue with wider group of representatives reporting	Full report, minutes, video or audio of meeting (15); minimal report, e.g. short news item (10); Irregular reporting (posting fewer reports than meetings) (5); No reporting (0)	15	(as above)
Fans Forum reporting	Full report, minutes, video or audio of meeting (15); minimal report, e.g. short news item (10); Irregular reporting (posting fewer reports than meetings) (5); No reporting (0)	15	(as above)
Club board meeting reports/minutes	Full report, minutes, video or audio of meeting (15); minimal report, e.g. short news item (10); Irregular reporting (posting fewer reports than meetings) (5); No reporting (0)	15	Club reports in full or part from its board meetings, or where a supporters' trust that owns its club, reports are issued in full or part via its own board meetings
Structured dialogue meetings with supporters' trust/independent group agenda	Agenda published in advance (5); No agenda published (0)	5	AGM agendas for fan owned clubs are scored full marks. Reports have to be regular and published for full marks.
Structured dialogue with wider group of representatives agenda	Agenda published in advance (5); No agenda published (0)	5	(as above)
Fans Forum agenda	Agenda published in advance (5); No agenda published (0)	5	(as above)

Club board meeting agendas	Agenda published in advance (5); No agen	5	Club issues agendas for its board meetings or announces them in advance; or where a supporters' trust that owns its club reports the agenda or notice of club board meetings
Section total		80	

Overall total	240
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# About TFE & Consultation Guru

**Think Fan Engagement (TFE)** was founded by Kevin Rye, an expert in Fan Engagement & the relationship between fans and clubs, and creator of the Fan Engagement Index.

TFE advises and works with owners, administrators, other rights holders (leagues, associations), brands and other organisations who seek to understand fans and the relationships they have with their clubs. We strongly advocating a culture of listening.

We publish the annual Fan Engagement Index, published in August every year, covering English men's football, and the Fan Engagement Pod, available wherever you get your podcasts.

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