

A message from the chairman

Dear Fellow Wanderer,

Transfers, Derby, and unacceptable behaviour at matches are on everyone's mind today. I originally planned to update you during this week on the state of the club and the many improvements we are implementing. However, events have overtaken those plans for now.

Our philosophy for each transfer period is consistent. We will engage to the extent we can make the club materially better and not violate our commitment to financial sustainability.

Pete, Gareth, and the staff have looked at many players. Scouting prospects is now an ongoing 12-month-a-year process with multiple in-house analysts. We only invite players into our club who meet our standard of excellence on and off the pitch. Our commitment to the club's culture is rock solid.

As of now, we have not found anyone in this window who will improve our squad for a price that we want to pay. We like our team. In part, this is because Gareth, Dobbo, Pete, Sam Grace, and the entire staff have done such a phenomenal job with our developmental squad.

Please take a moment to think about how many have played key roles as members of our first team during this year. Each of them has a huge future in football. And our club will be better in the future because of the training and experiences they are gaining now.

Derby is an interesting situation. Its administrators continue to peddle the premise that Wycombe is somehow responsible for its possible demise. Nothing could be further from the truth. Wycombe had nothing to do with its accumulation of approximately £60 million in debt, including nearly £30 million to the government, £20+ million to the holder of the note of Mr. Morris which is secured by the stadium, approximately £8 million of other football debt, and, of course, the many smaller non-football creditors from the Derby area.

As of today, the administrators have not stated their plans for the resolution of the debt with any of its creditors. Although they announced a "preferred bidder" would be known "before Christmas", it has not been named. Nor did they meet their own deadline of over a month ago of making the announcement "imminently". Nothing has changed concerning the disagreement between Wycombe and Derby. There have been no discussions, no calls, nothing since I visited their offices in London last November.

There are multiple reasons why Derby owes Wycombe money. Perhaps the simplest to understand is that Derby, once it lost its arbitration, deliberately delayed turning over its reconstituted financials to avoid relegation. It did not even meet the panel's deadline of August 14, which probably would have still allowed Wycombe to compete this year in the Championship. This cost Wycombe the difference in net revenue between competing in the Championship and League 1 this year and created likely financial losses beyond this year.

But the real reason for this letter is to discuss fan behaviour. On Sunday, the EFL issued a statement with which I agree. In addition, Adebayo Akinfenwa has spoken to the media to give his thoughts. You can find both on our website.

When Missy and I were in the UK several weeks ago, the board met and, at my request, affirmed our policy of zero tolerance for abusive behaviour including language whether it involved supporters, players, staff, and the opposition. In fact, it includes everyone. One of the

first things we had to do this year was ban several of our own fans for their behaviour. It was not easy but we will not have an abusive atmosphere. Your children and you should not have to put up with it. No one should.

All of which brings me to this past weekend's incidents involving my friend, Bayo Akinfenwa. From the first day I met him, I knew that he was a person who understands the principles of leadership. He has the capacity to take a situation seriously and yet enjoy himself. Fans throughout the world love to watch him play and appreciate his enjoyment of good natured banter with opposing fans and players.

At the same time, he and I agree there's no place in this world for hateful speech or attacks on others. I was tremendously proud of the way he, the gaffer, and the rest of the team handled the situation on Saturday. It was perfect. Kudos as well to the MK Dons' captain, manager, and players. There is simply no excuse for such behaviour and we will not tolerate it. Those responsible will be expelled and not allowed to return.

One of the things that makes me proudest of my affiliation with Wycombe is observing our players and their relationship with supporters of all clubs. It fills me with joy to see one of our players who has just finished a very hard-fought game take the time to shake hands with a fan, put an arm around a youngster, or take a moment to let everyone in attendance know how much the fans are appreciated. I will not allow those who do not respect others or the game to ruin the special relationship which exists among players, staff, and supporters. If there is a violation of our policy, that person or person will be expelled.

It's hard to believe we now have more than a week without football. I'm not quite sure how to spend them. Hopefully, it gives the boys a chance to heal and be ready for the final third of the season. Plus, we can make sure WanderersTV is up and in place. Lots of good things are ahead for us as a club. Missy and I look forward to spending a lot of time with you at Adams Park.

Today, I am proud to say,

Yeah, I'm a Wanderer too.

Rob Couhig
Chairman
Wycombe Wanderers