

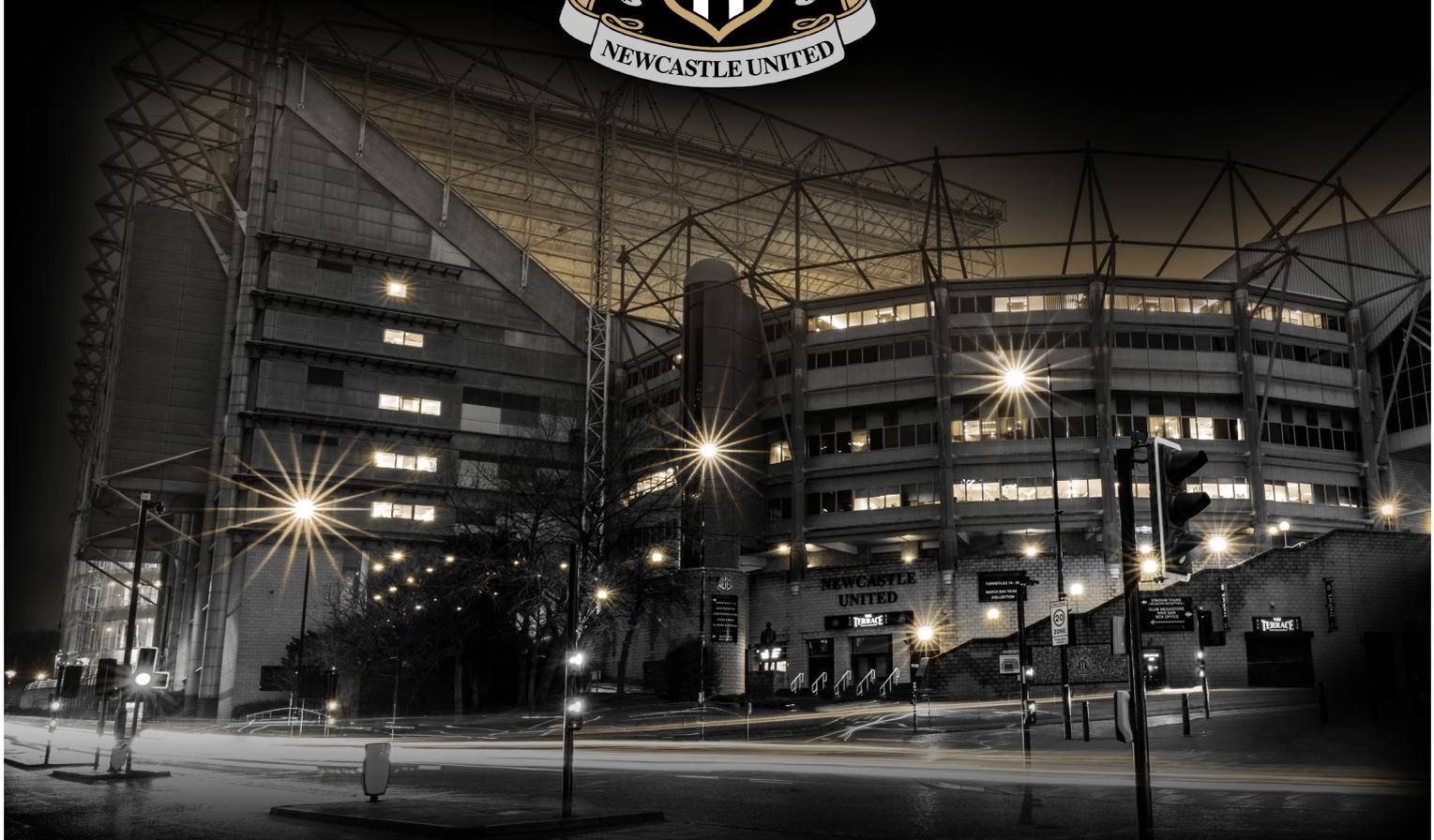


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DISABILITY NEWS

NEWSLETTER FOR NEWCASTLE UNITED'S
DISABLED SUPPORTERS AROUND THE WORLD



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INTRODUCTION

Hello, and welcome to the very first disabled supporters newsletter. The aim is to provide this in whatever format you require, and on a quarterly basis, to tell you all how things are going, what the club is doing for disabled supporters, and how to access services, tickets etc. The reason for the newsletter is that in the recent accessibility survey completed by hundreds of people, this was a suggestion, and whilst reading the comments, a number of people raised issues or requests that in fact were already in place, showing perhaps we need to better inform you all.

We hope you find it informative, and enjoy its content, but we are more than happy to take on suggestions and will adjust the newsletter as times passes to end up with the best, most informative publication possible.

I have now been here since early September 2017 in my role as Safeguarding, Welfare and Equality lead for the club, and I have loved every minute of it. As Steve Jobs said *"the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do."*

The relationship I have developed with the Newcastle United Disabled Supporters Association (NUDSA) is great, and they even invite me to their functions now! I keep in touch with them every week, and try to get round on a match-day to have a chat. A lot of what will be published in this newsletter is showing the work they do, and I hope if you are not a member, you at least consider it.

In this initial publication we will be looking at some of the work that has been ongoing over the last few months within the stadium, and some of the work that is ongoing behind the scenes, to make Newcastle United the best they can be off the pitch, to ensure your match-day experience is as positive as possible.

I will leave Rafa to do the on field stuff, but I am available if selected and was prolific in the Blyth and Wansbeck league 30 years ago.





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CHANGES TO THE STRUCTURE OF ST. JAMES' PARK

The club is constantly looking at improving the match-day experience for all fans attending St. James' Park. Some works that have been ongoing during the last few weeks and months include the following; -

Accessible drop counters

All around the stadium a number of dropped counters have been put in, allowing better access to wheelchair users etc.

Changing Places

The club has built two changing places rooms. One is located at pitch level in the East stand, the other is on level 7 in the Milburn stand towards the North stand. Both are accessed using a radar key. The advantage of the one in the Milburn stand is that it can be used if you are at a function on a non-match day as well. I am sure you will agree these are a great addition to the facilities at the club.





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CHANGES TO THE STRUCTURE OF ST. JAMES' PARK, CONT.

Leazes End (North Stand) raised platform

As those of you who attend the matches will have now seen, there was extensive work done to raise the viewing platform for wheelchair users in the Leazes end (sorry showing my age, North stand).

Here is the work getting done, hopefully those sitting there agree it has improved the match day view.





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BEHIND THE SCENES

We have been meeting some great people in the past few months, and in no particular order here is some of the work that has been going on;-

Percy Hedley – The club has hosted a group of children from the Percy Hedley foundation, and gave them a talk on employability, what an employer looks for, the kind of roles the club offer etc. The kids had a quiz and won prizes, and hopefully enjoyed the trip, this has now been repeated on a couple more occasions.

A young man from Percy Hedley is currently on a work placement, and has been given a variety of roles within the club. I hope he has enjoyed it as much as we have enjoyed having him here.

I attended a seminar hosted by Percy Hedley entitled 'Adjusting attitudes in the workplace,' this was great, and I came away with a lot to think about, and it was useful to speak to other companies from the City.

The club is utilising Percy Hedley to deliver training to its staff on disability awareness, this is also being delivered to Sodexo staff who are employed within the stadium.

And some students from Percy Hedley attended the academy for a talk on the role of the academy, and even had a kick about on one of the pitches, see picture below.

All of the above wouldn't have been possible without the great work of Dionne Smith at Percy Hedley, and I wish to extend my thanks to her.

Mental health in the workplace – NUFC hosted a conference on the 9th October 2017, which was opened by Kate Bradley from the Newcastle United foundation. A number of guest speakers outlined their findings and experiences and learning taken from it.

I also attended a Mental health first aid course, and the club is now seeking to roll out further training to its staff.

Disabled Go visit – Disabled Go carried out a survey of the facilities and ground between the 30th October and the 2nd November 2017. The club already featured on its website, but the survey updated the information available.

NUDSA – Player of the year night was held at St James Park on the 20th September 2017, the award was won by Matt Ritchie, and Javier Manquillo attended to collect the award on his behalf. Javier spent some time going round the room meeting all the supporters.

NUDSA also revealed that Dwight Gayle has become its patron. The NUDSA Christmas party was held on the 6th December 2017 at St. James' Park. This was hugely popular, and Dwight Gayle attended meeting the supporters and handing out prizes etc. NUDSA are attending the away match at Manchester City, with a bus load of supporters.



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BEHIND THE SCENES, CONT.

Action on Hearing loss – A meeting was held with Action on Hearing loss and a number of points raised were taken forward and their advice was invaluable in a number of departments.

British wireless for the blind fund – ten DAB radio's were donated by Action on Hearing loss. These were gratefully received and were first used at the Crystal palace match on the 21st October.

Accessible stadia links – All clubs we visit are spoken to ensure our supporters has receive the best treatment, and are aware of how to best access the respective stadiums. In addition we have sent our accessible stadia link to all clubs visiting St. James' Park.

Alzheimer's society – After a meeting with the Alzheimer's society which was prompted by a couple of issues within the stadium on a match-day, I have enrolled on a course to become a 'Dementia champion' so that training can be disseminated to key staff within the stadium.

We hope to continue to work with the Alzheimer's society to look at further work, and hopefully will reveal in the next news-letter some plans for a dementia meeting coffee morning.





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BOX OFFICE NEWS

Jan Brien is the Box office liaison officer for disabled fans, having worked for the club now for 23 years, she continues to work hard to make sure that supporters experience the best service possible. Jan can be contacted on disabilitysupport@nufc.co.uk.

At present the club offers just over 160 wheelchair spaces around the ground. This is due to increase by approximately 100 over the coming months.

The website offers further information on what information is required to qualify for a disability concession, and a link to when tickets become available is below.

<https://www.nufc.co.uk/tickets/on-sale-dates>.

The box office is one of the departments who are receiving disability awareness training in early 2018.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!
