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WIND CAUSES CHAOS ACROSS BOROUGH

by Sarah Dunn
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Free Press News

ANGRY SUPPORTERS START 'STADIUM WATCH' GROUP

A GROUP of disgruntled Rovers fans are to set up an independent body to monitor decision making at the Keepmoat Stadium.

And amid growing concern over pricing, parking, ticketing and now stewarding, they are threatening an organised boycott of spending at the new venue to make their point to the Stadium Management Company.

The 'Stadium Watch' group will be spearheaded by season ticket holder Nigel Wroe who formed a popular unofficial fans' website nine years ago.

And Mr Wroe, who also expressed his disappointment at the lack of club representation on the SMC, says a campaign of concerted action is needed after what he describes as "mismanagement" of the new £32million venue.

"Things are moving ahead. "We believe we have been let down and it's our aim to hit the SMC in the pocket, by refusing to pay their high prices in the concourses, in the bars and in the car park.

"They shouldn't be taking us for granted."

On behalf of all Rovers, Belles and Lakers fans, the group will operate under the slogan 'Are you prepared to do nothing for your club and your fellow supporters?' - asking fans to judge whether they are getting value for money at the Keepmoat and spending nothing if that proves not to be the case.

Among several immediate aims of the group are ensuring bar and concourse prices are brought into line with surrounding establishments, improving the ticketing process, establishing fair parking prices and increasing the accountability of the SMC.

The group also wish to see the Rovers crest emblazoned on the stadium's entrance and efforts made to maximise community involvement in all aspects of the Lakeside complex.

"If this is a community stadium it should be run with a public service ethos and not a get-rich quick attitude," said Mr Wroe, who religiously travels up from Hampshire to watch Rovers.

"The fans recognise that in the entertainment business the customer is king and if the SMC continue to use us and abuse us, they will feel a financial penalty in lost sales. As momentum picks up and sales suffer, the SMC, we hope, will gradually get the message.

"Stadium Watch are going to be here for as long as it takes."

A spokesman for the SMA said: "We have very regular contact with the supporters' director and the with the official supporters' clubs and feedback from the fans is channelled through these clubs."

Stadium is fantastic - See Letters Page 14, Doncaster Free Press
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