

Paul Cuffe

I have been a follower of Huddersfield Town since the club's 2003 administration period. I've been a very fortunate fan to see us rise to the top division from the very brink of collapse.

I've been involved in the supporters' trust movement with Huddersfield Town Supporters Association (HTSA) since November 2016 and taken an increasingly prominent role at HTSA since. In my time at HTSA, the association has found a reinvigorated passion for representing the supporters of Huddersfield Town whilst taking a more active role in the communities around the football club. That passion has also seen HTSA working beyond our own fanbase to work with other club trusts and supporter groups, including being part of the Premier League group of supporters' trusts.



As part of the work we have done within the community, we have joined and started a range of community projects and campaigns to help foster the spirit of togetherness amongst not only the Huddersfield Town fanbase but of other fanbases across the country. We have taken inspiration from the Spirit of Shankly and Blue Union trusts of Liverpool and Everton, alongside Newcastle United Supporters Trust in starting a foodbank run by football fans. Huddersfield Town have since become a partner in running our foodbank collections, having seen the value in the work we have been doing. We have worked alongside the late and great Jacqui Forster in promoting and championing the Women at the Game campaign, running our own events with both Huddersfield Town and Huddersfield Town Ladies. This summer has seen us host our first refugees football tournament, to help surface the ongoing crises facing refugees who become a part of our communities. These are just a handful of the projects we have been involved with since I became involved with HTSA.

One of the biggest problems facing supporters today revolves around terrible club ownership. At HTSA, we look to secure the long-term future of Huddersfield Town, irrespective of who may own the club. We also seek to help fans of other clubs to secure the future of their clubs as well. Football is nothing without the passionate fans who support their respective clubs week in, week out.

Having experienced both the bad and good sides of club ownership in my time as a supporter, I can bring fresh experiences and perspectives to the table in highlighting and challenging supporters issues over governance and club management. As a relatively young person, I can also provide a more youthful insight to the supporters' trust movement. I might not have years of experience in the politics of football or supporters' trusts, but I have a strong passion to improve the football going experience for the millions of football supporters around the country. I invite you to vote for me where I will continue to drive forward the supporters trust movement, along with ensuring that clubs are community focused, becoming more integrated with the communities that make up their fanbases.

Antony Wilkinson

I have been a football supporter for over fifty years, my support being for Blackpool FC since the age of five.

In 2014, Blackpool Supporters Trust was formed with the help of Supporters Direct and I became an active member and volunteer of BST from its beginning. In 2017 I stood for election to the committee of BST and was successful in being elected. Since being a BST committee member, I have been involved in many aspects of the trust's activities including many community based events such as a Remembrance Day ceremony and food bank collection.



The problems faced by Blackpool supporters over recent years have been well documented and BST have become very involved with the issue of football governance. We are currently using our experiences at our own club to attempt to bring reform to the game nationally. Recently, we were able to attend a meeting with the EFL and are also in discussions with the FA, EPL and DCMS, along with numerous MPs and local councils. We are pleased to have been working with SD on these matters and will continue to do so. The problems at Blackpool have been extreme but we are acutely aware that many clubs are suffering from the actions of rogue owners and we are determined to help bring the change which all football clubs need.

I have also been involved with leafleting and speaking to visiting supporters outside Bloomfield Road to explain the issues affecting Blackpool FC and publicising the Fans Not Numbers campaign, with many interesting and useful conversations with supporters from around the country.

It was sad news for everyone in January this year when we heard of the death of Jimmy Armfield. The statue of Jimmy, which stands outside Bloomfield Road, became the focus of attention. The committee of BST including myself arranged for a memorial service at the statue which was well attended by supporters. Jimmy was very well respected in Blackpool and was involved with many charities including Trinity Hospice, who provide palliative care for cancer patients. It was decided that BST would have a football scarf produced in memory of Jimmy to donate all proceeds to Trinity Hospice. I was proud to be involved with the project, which had the outcome of providing a piece of Jimmy Armfield memorabilia for supporters and a cheque from BST to Trinity Hospice for over £2,500.

When earlier this year the election for the Supporters Direct England and Wales Football Council took place, I was put forward by BST to stand and was successful in being elected for 3 years. I frequently attend many Supporters Direct events, the latest being the SD Members Day in Birmingham.

In the majority of my working life I have been self-employed, having set up and run a number of successful businesses and now consider myself to be semi-retired, running a small property portfolio and an accredited Landlord with the National Landlords Association.

I believe in the ethos of supporters trusts and see a bright future for currently established trusts and opportunities for many new trusts to be formed. I feel that my experience as part of a very active Supporters' Trust committee as well as being a football supporter and from my working life would make me suitable for a position on the Supporters Direct board if I should be elected.

Luke Cox

Below expresses why I firmly believe I would be a valuable member of the Supporters Direct Board who could more than adequately contribute to the future strategic direction of the organisation.

To introduce myself, I am 21 and have lived in Worcester in the West Midlands for the near entirety of my life bar three years in London at university. I was brought up a West Bromwich Albion fan but in the last 4 years I have realised the importance of supporting your local football club. Despite the turmoil and tragic disintegration of Worcester City FC, I have fallen head over heels for them as I have come to appreciate that there is something intangibly special about following your local side.



I have just finished my degree in Football Business & Marketing from the University Campus of Football Business, Wembley. My degree covered a broad array of subjects from which I have gained a firm and thorough understanding of the modern football industry. Whilst studying, I have gained a fair amount of experience in football. Whilst in London, I spent time working with non-league side Wembley FC, where I worked on projects such as increasing sponsorship, match attendances and improving communications. Last July, I spent time in Glasgow at Hampden Park working with the Scottish Professional Football League's Head of Digital, where I gained an understanding of digital marketing and general operations of a top national football league. More recently, this year I have spent time with the executive team at Supporters Direct, from which I have gained a thorough understanding of community ownership, good governance and supporter representation in football. Through this, I have come to understand the invaluable work Supporters Direct carries out through its programme of services. Since March 2017, I have been helping the WFCFC Supporters' Trust on several tasks mainly focusing on improving its communications with members. Since then I have been in the trenches of every challenge we have faced. This year at our AGM, I was voted onto the Trust board.

My experiences academically and professionally combined with watching the painstaking self-destruction of my home town club have caused me to realise there is a great disparity in the control of the future of football. I have come to realise the imperative for supporter contribution and influence in the running of football clubs. I believe football is riddled with the marginalisation of football fans where other more financially lucrative focuses are favoured – or at the other end of the spectrum, football clubs are controlled by those who are out of touch with supporters and the new demands of football. The Trust movement curated and cultivated by Supporters Direct has been instrumental in challenging supporters and clubs alike to take responsibility for what their clubs should be within the communities they reside in. Football clubs are cultural institutions and symbols of regional identity, and too many are on their knees because of poor governance and a lack of supporter representation. For football clubs to provide a sense of regional identity, there need to be channels to facilitate a strong relationship between supporters and clubs. To me, this is why supporters' trusts are vital in modern football where countless internal and external factors can inadvertently and consciously diminish the very purpose of a football club.

I believe that my experiences within football and the understanding I have gained of the modern game will allow me to contribute to SD at board level. If given the opportunity, my inclusion on the SD board would bring fresh ideas and new interpretations to addressing the matters that the organisation handles that, owing to my age, would be more representative of the younger generation of football supporters. My presence on the SD board would be an initial step in the right direction to ensure that Supporters Direct is more diversely representative of the Trust movement, and the wider football supporting population. The mission of Supporters Direct is arguably well-known amongst many of the more experienced generation of fans, however, there is a danger that younger football fans are so fixated on the glamour of top

professional football that issues surrounding governance and supporter representation could lose their significance in time. Supporters Direct already has a wealth of experience on its board, but I believe I could complement that by contributing my perspective which would bring an important youth element to the board, supported by my experience of a professional beginning their career in the football industry.

Rob Street

I have been an obsessive sports fan all my life whether that is cricket, rugby union, rugby league, athletics... the list goes on and on. As my long suffering wife knows though my overwhelming passion is for football. The storage unit I rent which is full of football programmes is testament to this.



I have, for 40 years, been a supporter of Billericay Town FC through good times and bad and when my club saw a change of ownership in recent times I thought now was the time to have structured fan involvement and influence to represent the views and needs of our supporters. With this in mind I with fellow supporters and the help of Supporters Direct set up the Billericay Town Supporters Society. As a working party we unified our support base which in the past had been fractured and now have a thriving membership. At our inaugural AGM I was appointed our first Secretary which is the post I currently hold. We are currently building a relationship with the football club and have made them well aware of our aims of being the voice for our supporters in fast changing and challenging times.

Personally I have worked in the general insurance industry for 30 years in many and varied roles. This has given me an understanding of the importance and structures of governance and also the understanding of how to implement and communicate when changes occur in an organisation. I believe these are skills that are transferable into a position on the Supporters Direct board and will prove useful for all member trusts.

As a Billericay Town supporter (and erstwhile Leyton Orient fan) I believe that an effective Fit and Proper Persons test should be implemented whether that is under the Football Association or another governing body. Too many clubs have suffered at the hands of either unscrupulous or indeed incompetent ownership. A transparent and rigorous ownership governance process would help safeguard the future of many clubs.

Since becoming involved with Supporters Direct and the Trust movement I have seen what good it can bring and I believe I can represent the views and of an ordinary football fan and that of holders of officers positions in our many trusts.

I hope you will give me a chance to make a difference for you and your trust.

Lastly and by no means least I would like to thank the board of Billericay Town Supporters Society and Leyton Orient Fans Trust for their support of my nomination.

Neil Le Milliere

I'm 64, married to Julie, and a retired Civil Servant having worked in Whitehall for 36 years until early retirement in 2004 due to cuts.

I've been an Exeter City fan since I can remember although I left Exeter with my family in 1966, for Kent. From 1980, I, with my brother, became supporters going to more and more games, home and away. I was hooked for life by our fabulous 1981 FA cup run.

I've played/been involved in football administration for 51 years.



Supporter Involvement Experience

I got involved with the Exiled EC Supporters in London in 1984, then took over as travel organiser for home/away matches in 1988. This has proved very rewarding if sometimes arduous, bringing me sharply in touch with supporters; their feelings; and opinions.

I have been involved with running an internet mail group for Exeter fans since 1999.

My involvement with EC took a sharp upturn in 2000 when a group of fans tried to raise enough money to buy a player from Leyton Orient who was on loan to us.

We were unsuccessful as the player wanted to move up the leagues, however this embryonic group then formed the first supporters trust, EC Transfer Trust, with the aim of raising money and supporting the club as it was again suffering hard times following an earlier administration from 1994-96.

We successfully invested money in Exeter's Youth Teams and donated money for specific club needs. The Club acknowledged what we were doing by inviting us to elect an Associate Director to the board.

This coincided with the founding of Supporters Direct whose aim was to get supporters more involved with the ownership and running of clubs. We contacted Supporters Direct who helped our conversion into an IPS, becoming a fully-fledged Trust. I was a co-opted member representing the views of Exiled Supporters until I stood down under our six-year term of office rule. Following this I was elected back on to the Board.

Whilst we became an IPS our club got into further grave financial difficulties and asked the Trust to take over running the club in May/June 2003. This coincided with relegation to the Conference.

After successfully keeping the Club going, we purchased the majority shareholding and successfully negotiated a CVA with the creditors taking us into administration in October 2003. We came out of the CVA in December/January 2005/6 and the Club is now the pride of the City again, promoted twice in consecutive seasons running firmly in the black. Although we have since been relegated back to league two we remain solvent and our youth policy has just given us funding to operate for the next three years without any financial worries – if we continue to be prudent.

We made it to the League 2 play-off final in 16/17 and 17/18 although falling at the final hurdle both times.

I have therefore seen/been involved firsthand in setting up a Trust; supporters taking over/running a club for Supporters and the Local Community; continuing to be so all the way from the Conference to League One.

The Trust movement elected me to the SD Board in 2005 when SD was looking to fill vacancies. I was elected the following year to a 'permanent' three-year position and was successful again in the elections in 2009, 2012, & 2015.

On the SD board I am also Chair of and elected to the England/Wales Council; Chair of the Governance Sub-committee and was in the past the SD representative on the Trustees Advisory Board of Kick it Out before this body was abolished.

I also hold a position on an FA Compliance Monitoring Group representing supporters. I have found being a SD Director/E&W Councillor both rewarding and challenging, and I feel I have made a significant contribution to SD being involved in the top-level policy making decisions as well as contributing in the roles I have taken on.

I have increasingly got involved when appropriate, and called upon to do so, at the 'coal face'. Firstly, as a representative for SD at various member trust meetings or giving advice to those looking to set up trusts and secondly by offering my services as a returning officer to various Trusts which has allowed me to spread the word. I have also acted as the Independent Chair or person on various Trusts' election groups.

I managed to attend almost all Board Meetings held during my present term of office though my organisation of an annual Exeter Supporters tour abroad has unfortunately coincided with two of our AGMs. Fortunately, this year the tour is earlier/the AGM later meaning I will be attending.

What I Can Offer

Having experienced the setting up of our Trust; the takeover of our club; and the operation of our club in the football league; I have been able to share and pass on my experiences to fans in similar situations, offering help and advice wherever needed. The most important lesson to pass on is it is never too early to form a supporters Trust, the earlier the better, as although a crisis is needed to motivate the majority, having the infrastructure already in place helps greatly.

It is also worth pointing out that, as with Exeter, Supporters Clubs and Trusts are two different things and fulfil two distinct and vital roles. My experience with both is something I have also been able to pass on especially with the possible merger.

Having spent a lifetime operating in 'committee' environments, fulfilling various roles, I feel these skills/abilities have been well suited to the requirements of the post of SD Director; of benefit to the supporters' direct movement generally; and latterly as an E&W councillor.

I invite you to vote for me and promise to continue to work towards getting supporters at every club involved with the running and owning of their clubs wherever possible, combining this with ensuring that clubs are community focused, fully involving those communities in the life of the football club and vice versa.

Dave Pennington

Football supporters are the lifeblood of their clubs and their teams. Our rights and needs as supporters and our club's own heritage should be paramount. As a passionate advocate of these principles I have worked tirelessly as a volunteer, a Committee Member and latterly a Director of Manchester United Supporters Trust (MUST). Having been able to retire from my full time career last year, I am now able to devote significant time and energies to the cause that drives me.



Through MUST I have engaged extensively with fellow Trusts, and with both Supporters Direct and the Football Supporters Federation (FSF), and have been prominent in campaigns on both match going issues and the ownership and governance of our clubs – needs that I believe are inextricably linked. That experience has led me to the conclusion that the collective interests of supporters and their individual Trusts can best be served by a single united, more efficient and effective national body that can harness the collective and wide ranging skills and expertise of the individuals that would serve it as both employees and volunteers.

I am therefore unapologetically supportive of the proposed single organisation that must and will incorporate and deliver the current SD mission including support for the principles and needs of Supporter Trusts and Supporter Owned Clubs. Over the last year I have used my elected position within FSF to influence the design of the new organisation to that effect.

However, having been immensely disappointed by the decision by a majority of the current Board not to support the jointly developed proposal, I am now standing to offer SD Member Trusts a voice to support positive engagement in the transition to that single organisation should members vote for it in July. This would include the establishment of functions that cover SD's core mission, the integration of staff and other resources, and establishing a process to enable Rugby League and other sports to be offered an appropriate consultancy support service.

Should members decide to pursue an independent SD with a new, more limited remit, as an elected Board member I equally would still commit my energies and skills to support that course, with particular concern for the staff who would be affected.

Tom Greatrex

I am seeking re-election to the Supporters Direct board, having first been elected one year ago, and as the current Chair of SD, to continue to contribute to the work of SD in promoting good governance in sport, campaigning for reform to prevent the abuse of clubs by unsuitable owners and securing greater supporter influence and ownership in sport.



As well as being Chair of SD since July 2017, I am currently in my second spell as the Chair of the Fulham Supporters' Trust which I helped establish in 2003, having spent most of the years in between living and working in Scotland. Professionally, I run a trade association in the energy sector, and have previously been an elected politician and trade union official.

During the last year, I am pleased to have been the Chair of the board that has supported the work of SD and our Chief Executive, Ashley Brown, and our professional and dedicated staff as they have been able to make significant progress. Since last summer, it is Supporters' Direct that have led campaigns on football governance, that has helped develop the first memorandums of understanding between EFL clubs and supporter Trusts as part of the development of structured dialogue, and is integral to the work the FA and government have recently announced to properly investigate and evaluate the impact of ownership of stadiums on clubs, seen most clearly in the current situation of Dulwich Hamlet. At the same time, we have been developing our relationships in other sports, while improving our social media presence and communication activity. To have been able to do that against the backdrop of the debate and forthcoming decision about the future of SD demonstrates the professionalism and dedication of our staff team, and the many volunteers in Trusts throughout the country who are standing up for the role and contribution of supporters in sport.

The responsibility of the Board is to help set the strategy for SD, to oversee the running of the organisation and to support our staff and volunteers. During the last twelve months, much of the Board's time has been taken up with developing and evaluating options for the future of SD and setting the context for the decision that member Trusts will make at the AGM later this summer. Whichever option we collectively decide to take, the same imperative will apply – to protect, enhance and develop the mission of SD. If that is during a period of time when two organisations are together forming a new entity, or if it is as part of a refocused distinct organisation, both outcomes will require Board members with a determination to ensure the focus on supporter involvement, ownership and good governance remains integral to what we do.

I believe that there has not been a more important time for the contribution that supporters make to the running of their clubs to be recognised, for governance to be improved and developed, and for the links between clubs, fans and communities to be properly appreciated. We have seen the consequences of poor management, absent or mendacious owners and executives without a real appreciation for the importance of stewardship of assets of community value. They are writ large through every example of crisis clubs at every level – and it would be complacency of the highest order to assume that because there have not been clubs going into administration anywhere near as frequently as a few years ago, there is a backdrop of stability. Clubs at all levels have suffered from the lack of adequate regulation and appropriate standards of governance, and for as long as there are clubs neglected, abused and mismanaged, then there is a role for the work of Supporters' Direct.

I am putting myself forward for re-election to ensure that this vital role of Supporters' Direct is not lost, neglected or downplayed in the future, and over a period of time that will include disruption and adjustment. My determination is to seek to protect our mission in whatever circumstance we find

ourselves after the AGM, and to continue to do that in a way that adds insight, value and supports the invaluable work of our professional staff.