



LEAGUE ONE / LEAGUE TWO NETWORK – ELECTION STATEMENTS 2020

PETER LEATHAM – OFFICIAL ACCRINGTON STANLEY SUPPORTERS' TRUST

I am a 62-year-old retired national Account Director and now serve as chairman of the Official Accrington Stanley Supporters Trust (OASST), a tenure which has lasted since being elected in June 2016.

I have recently overseen and instigated our conversion to a community benefit society, under the auspices of the FSA & FCA, this was completed and registered in December 2019.

We are an active board, working closely with the club owner, Andy Holt and his MD in developing projects to enhance fans experience on match days at the Wham Stadium. To this end we signed an MoU with the club in February 2020 and we are party to all the discussions, decisions and running of our community club.

I have also recently been elected a board member to the Accrington Stanley Community Trust which helps further cement the bonds between the two trusts and the football club.

In my previous working life, I worked at a senior level with large organisations and have good computer and interpersonal skills as well as the ability to organise and motivate others to a common goal. I unfortunately had to take early retirement, due to ill health, in October 2013 after 35 years' service.

We are fortunate to have good ownership in Andy Holt, who values our Trust and the contributions we make towards the strength of the club in the community. He is also a massive and vocal advocate of change in the structure of our game and I share many of his views regarding regulation and the need for a structural overhaul especially in light of the recent revelations which threatens the very existence of our national football pyramid.

HEATHER ALDERSON – CHARLTON ATHLETIC SUPPORTERS' TRUST

Football binds us. It binds generations. It binds communities. It binds the right here, right now with the traditional. It is our great leveller that has the capacity to welcome all into a world of shared emotion and love of the beautiful game. In recent times, those bindings have been under strain: dodgy owners, financial chaos, discrimination rearing its ugly head, not to mention COVID. At every moment of strain, one thing has been very apparent to me: never ever underestimate football fans. As a Charlton supporter I was an active campaigner as part of CARD (Campaign Against Roland Duchatelet) and latterly as a member of the CAST board.

Now that the shenanigans at my club have (fingers crossed) finally died down, I would like to devote my efforts to help move football forward on behalf of all fans, not least to pay back all the fans of other clubs that supported us #fansunited

My day job is in the advertising agency Adam&EveDDB. In fact, most of my career has been in marketing and advertising. Over the years I have made a number of famous campaigns for companies in the UK and around the world. My specific role is to ensure that the advertising is effective. That responsibility has taught me to identify the issue, seek insight from people, simplify and then work with others to get to the best creative answer. I hope to bring those skills to the FSA.

JAMES YOUNG – ROBINS TRUST (CHELTENHAM TOWN)

I can't remember the exact date when I first became part of the organisation that is the Robins Trust – it was so long ago, it's barely relevant.

It was around 2003 I became interested in turning our club's supporters' association into a Trust and the rest is history.

And that is how at the age of 25 I became the Robins Trust's founding chairman. Many years later, I am still here, still doing all I can to ensure the fans' voice is the most significant one at my club.

Our Trust has achieved a great deal, it has raised and invested significant funds into our club and now has a Fan Elected Director, but our work is never done.

Thankfully, our club has never had its crisis moment: until now.

And that is why I feel especially motivated to join the collective effort from across the country to Sustain the Game and change football for the better.

The game is approaching a significant crossroads.

Difficult decisions are coming. Changes will have to be made and I believe the supporters should have a huge say in what comes next.

As well as my passion for supporter engagement and investment, I believe my professional skills will complement and benefit the FSA.

For 14 of the last 16 years, I worked as a sports reporter and writer and then sports editor at a regional newspaper, as well as a matchday broadcaster for the BBC.

Now I work in PR, communications and marketing for a large private company and believe I can play a role in helping the FSA shape and deliver its message.

But most of all, I feel I can bring my passion and energy into fighting for the interests of the average fan on the terraces – as that's what I am.

IAN BRIDGE – BOLTON WANDERERS SUPPORTERS' TRUST

With our national game facing massive uncertainty for many reasons, life outside the bubble of the top level of the Premier League for all other clubs is becoming more difficult. This is precisely why the lifeblood of English football, the supporters, are becoming increasingly more important with each passing day.

Supporter representation at individual club level is essential. However, to have the greatest level of influence, in any upcoming reviews, the FSA will be critical in ensuring that influence is channelled in the most effective way possible.

As a BWFC supporter of 60 years, and a co-founder and past chair of Bolton Wanderers Supporters' Society, my experiences of the last five years have opened my eyes to the many instances of selfish arrogant and incompetent ownership and governance evident in many areas. Unfortunately, this malaise, is not limited to club ownership, with the "competition organisers" also contributing to the problem.

Many clubs do have responsible and sensible owners. However, nobody knows a club better than that particular club's supporters and their voices need to be heard and represented in a more effective and responsible manner in the months and years to come.

My experience over recent years at Bolton Wanderers in contact and dealings with unprincipled owners, ineffective governing bodies and insolvency practitioners has given me a great appreciation of the important part the FSA will play in the future of football in this country.

On this basis, I would therefore like to put my name forward for election to the FSA National Council and request that I be given an opportunity to help in representing supporters in shaping the future of our national game.

Thank you.