



CHELSEA SUPPORTERS' TRUST NEWSLETTER – March 2020

Chairman's Introduction

Welcome to the March 2020 edition of the CST Newsletter. We thought hard about whether to put one out at this extraordinary time, and decided that, on balance, it was important to communicate with our members, not least on issues outside the cloistered world of football.

In the unprecedented circumstances we find ourselves, a sense of perspective is clearly needed. Football is only football and at a time when lives are at stake, and livelihoods threatened, Chelsea's senior figures have been rightly circumspect when talking about the resolution of this season and plans for next. It is a shame that those at West Ham and Southampton, among others, cannot exercise the same restraint and judgement.

We don't know when top-level football will start again, and neither does anybody else. Whether the 2019/20 season is cancelled, frozen at this point or played to a finish at some unspecified point is, frankly, an utter irrelevance at a time of national and international crisis and it belittles the game when some of those in positions of authority show such a warped sense of perspective.

For now, we hope you and your family all stay safe.

Cliff Auger
Chair, Chelsea Supporters' Trust

CST Initiatives and Supporters Issues

Tickets and Season Tickets

We remain in contact with Chelsea FC about ticketing issues for both this season and next, including opportunities for payment holidays, but, as you can appreciate, with things changing daily nothing concrete can yet be announced.

We also raised the issue of helping out supporters who lost money when the Bayern Munich away game was firstly due to be played behind closed and then postponed. Again, we will remind the club about this when things become a bit more clear.

CST Special General Meeting

Thank you to everybody that came along to the SGM after the Tottenham game. Unfortunately, the planned Met Police guests were "otherwise engaged" and therefore could not make it. However, it gave us a good chance to have a lively and informed discussion about issues facing supporters and what we, as a trust are doing to help.

Community

Hammersmith and Fulham Foodbank

The last of the food that we had collected and the cash bucket was delivered to the Hammersmith and Fulham Foodbank offices on March 23rd.

We, of course, do not know when we can re commence our collections before matches but unfortunately the foodbank is extremely busy in these troubled times and needs donations more than ever. If you are able to donate please go to <https://hammersmithfulham.foodbank.org.uk/> where there are instructions on how you can donate.

Stoll Foundation

The CST has also been in communication with our friends and Stamford Bridge neighbours at the Stoll Foundation. An action plan is in place to meet the needs of the residents, many of whom fall into the current at risk category within the corona virus pandemic. As with all charities, donations are always welcome.

Their website is accessible here <https://www.stoll.org.uk/> where you can read about the great work they do and donate if you are able.

Sleep Out Cheque presentation

On behalf of all of you that raised money and donated to "The Big Stamford Bridge Sleep Out" last year. Cliff Auger, Mark Meehan and Paul Hay were honoured to be able to hand over the cheques to the two charities.

The presentation took place on the pitch before the Everton game. Receiving the cheques on behalf of the charities were Alex Korobin of Stoll Foundation and Abi Taiwo from Glass Doors. We were joined on the pitch by Christian Pulisic.



We would also like to thank Stoll for the chance to raffle off places in the luxury box. Eight pairs of tickets were won, mainly by CST members. Stoll have asked us to thank everybody who entered the competition for their generosity.

Chelsea Foundation

A number of CST board members had a useful meeting with Simon Taylor of the Chelsea Foundation recently (before social distancing), exploring matters of mutual interest. Notes from this meeting will appear shortly on our website.

Corona Virus - Useful links and news (current at time)

Here are some links, you may find useful, to Government and NHS sites to keep up to date on current Covid-19 advice, as well as initiatives by clubs.

- Government appeal for NHS volunteer responders
<https://www.goodsamapp.org/nhsvolunteerresponders>
- One of many national mutual aid volunteer groups
<https://covidmutualaid.org/>

- Appeal by foodbanks for food and cash donations <https://www.trusselltrust.org/>
- Appeal for parking spaces near hospitals <https://www.justpark.com/about/coronavirus-appeal/>
- West Ham supporters group WHUISA have published some useful links to services <https://whuisa.org/help-a-hammer>
- Roman Abramovich offers Stamford Bridge hotel for use by NHS staff <https://www.chelseafc.com/en/news/2020/03/18/hotel-at-stamford-bridge-to-be-used-by-nhs-medical-staff>
- Gary Neville offers Hotel Football to NHS <https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/whats-on/whats-on-news/gary-neville-ryan-giaggs-close-17945541>
- Watford FC offer help to NHS <https://www.watfordfc.com/club/coronavirus-hornets-hospital-help>
- Brighton and Bournemouth to offer tickets to NHS staff <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/football/52033953>
- BBCs roundup of how Premier League clubs are trying to help <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/football/51973512>

A piece on 'Mutual Aid' by Debs Coady

We are in the midst of troubling times. But out of adversity comes opportunity, in this case an opportunity for communities to come together for our mutual benefit.

There has been an overwhelming response to the government's call for volunteers in England (currently) to assist the NHS as a volunteer responder via the GoodSAM app in conjunction with the Royal Voluntary Service. (link can be found in previous section)

Councils everywhere are arranging volunteer programmes for people to help, particularly the vulnerable – the 1m residents who are most at risk and will need shopping and prescriptions delivered and councils are getting programmes organised in town halls around the country for people to put parcels of food and other useful goods together One such group to spring out of this crisis is Covid Mutual Aid UK and it already holds a list of thousands of support groups across the country. Through social media I found a group had been set up in my London borough, which has been broken down into wards, and where local co-ordinators are ensuring all roads are covered by volunteers.

To all the homes in my three small allocated roads I have delivered a standard designed leaflet giving my contact details, in the event of households and vulnerable neighbours requiring support during periods of self-isolation. This can range from basic shopping of essential items, picking up prescriptions, posting mail, or just a chat over the telephone.

Our ward volunteers are connected via a WhatsApp group and we share information and ask questions. There have already been requests for help, but mostly so far we have received many calls of thanks. People are genuinely happy to know that, if needed, someone is at the end of a phone to assist. As we move on, we know we are likely to receive more calls for support and our informal procedures are being tightened in line with safeguarding guidelines and best practice.

None of us really knows how this situation will pan out or how long it will last. In the meantime, all we can do is look out for each other. Out of this adversity, let's hope that when we do come out of the other side we will realise there are some good people about and the mobilisation of so many will be a lasting legacy for good.

Please support our NHS - stay indoors and keep washing your hands!

Thank you for your continued support and please, Stay Safe