



## **Chelsea Supporters' Trust Newsletter – August 2026**

I hope you have had an enjoyable and restful summer, and welcome to the latest Chelsea Supporters' Trust newsletter ahead of the 2026/27 season.

After an extraordinarily difficult campaign last year, particularly during its closing months, there is something especially welcome about the prospect of a new season and a fresh start.

There is plenty to update you on from the Trust, particularly around the significant ticketing changes now coming into effect. But first, to matters on the pitch.

### **Welcome, Xabi**

On behalf of everyone at the Chelsea Supporters' Trust, I would like to welcome Xabi Alonso to Chelsea FC and wish him every success as our new manager.

His pedigree as both a player and manager speaks for itself, and he arrives at Stamford Bridge following a hugely disappointing season for everyone associated with Chelsea.

After so much change and upheaval, I hope Xabi is given the opportunity and support required to bring stability and, ultimately, success back to our football club.

Whatever concerns supporters may have about matters away from the pitch, we all want to see Chelsea competing at the level this club should expect. We wish Xabi and the team all the very best for the season ahead.

### **Ken Bates**

The summer also brought the very sad news of the passing of former Chelsea owner and chairman Ken Bates.

Ken was undoubtedly one of the most significant figures in the modern history of Chelsea Football Club. He took charge during one of the most precarious periods in our history and played a defining role in securing the club's future at Stamford Bridge, while helping lay the foundations for much of the success that followed.

Ken was a character who generated strong opinions throughout his time at Chelsea. What cannot be disputed is the scale of his impact on our club and his importance to its history.

His place in Chelsea history is assured, and our thoughts remain with his wife Susannah, his family, friends and all those who knew him.

Thank you, Ken.

### **Ticketing: Welcome Progress, But Concerns Remain**

There was welcome news earlier this summer when Chelsea confirmed that general admission season ticket and match-by-match prices would be frozen for the 2026/27 season.

The CST had consistently made clear that affordability must remain central to Chelsea's ticketing policy. After such a challenging season, the decision to freeze prices was significant and positive, and demonstrated what can be achieved when the club listens to supporters and its recognised supporter bodies.

Unfortunately, our concerns about several of the wider ticketing changes remain.

Most notably, the CST and a significant majority of matchgoing supporters strongly opposed the introduction of the new ticket application window and ballot process when it was proposed at the end of last season.

Our concern was never opposition to change for the sake of it. We support measures that tackle touting, fraud and the misuse of tickets.

Our concern was much simpler. Despite repeatedly asking, we saw no evidence that balloting would result in more tickets reaching genuine Chelsea supporters.

We also felt strongly that the club should fix the fundamentals first.

Last season was an extremely difficult one for supporters attempting to buy tickets. Confidence in the ticketing operation was badly damaged. With new leadership now in place within the ticketing team, our preference was to give that operation time to improve, embed new processes and demonstrate that the basics could be delivered consistently before introducing a large number of further changes.

Chelsea chose a different approach.

Unfortunately, the first ticket application process, for Brighton at home, did little to reassure us. The allocation and distribution of tickets was plagued by problems, with supporters receiving outcomes considerably later than originally planned.

The first operation of the new Automatic Cup Scheme also caused significant frustration. A scheme intended to make the process easier instead left a number of supporters who had opted in having to purchase their own tickets.

These may prove to be teething problems, and we sincerely hope they are. But they also illustrate why the CST cautioned against introducing so many significant changes at once.

Our focus now is on ensuring the new arrangements work as fairly and effectively as possible for Chelsea supporters.

Central to that will be transparency.

If Chelsea is going to operate a ballot system, supporters should be able to understand how it is performing. The CST will therefore continue to push the club to publish meaningful, fixture-by-fixture data, including the number of applications received, the number of tickets available and the resulting success rates.

Other clubs operating similar systems provide this information to their supporters. Chelsea should do the same.

We will also be asking our members and the wider fanbase for feedback after the first month of the season. That will allow us to assess the changes based on supporters' actual experiences and take a clear body of evidence back to the club.

The CST will always support sensible changes that make ticketing fairer, safer and more accessible. Equally, where supporters raise legitimate concerns, we will continue to challenge the club robustly and constructively until those concerns are properly addressed.

## **CST Annual General Meeting**

Finally, I am looking forward to welcoming members to the Chelsea Supporters' Trust Annual General Meeting at **12pm on Saturday 29 August**.

As previously announced, this year's AGM will take place online via Zoom.

In previous years, the Trust has been able to hold its AGM at Stamford Bridge without a venue hire charge. This year we were quoted a substantial fee to use a room at the stadium and, as a member-funded organisation, the Board did not believe it would be responsible to spend that level of members' money on a single meeting.

I appreciate that some members would have preferred to attend in person, and I share that disappointment. However, we will make the AGM as open and inclusive as possible, with opportunities to submit questions in advance and participate on the day, while a full recording will also be made available afterwards.

This is not a move away from face-to-face engagement. The new CST Board will hold informal matchday drop-in sessions during the season and we remain committed to arranging an in-person Special General Meeting at the earliest suitable opportunity.

Full joining details for the AGM can be found below, and I hope as many members as possible will join us.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support of the Trust. As always, I am keen to hear directly from as many members as possible. If you'd like to meet before a match or arrange a call, please do get in touch with me directly. The CST is at its strongest when it properly reflects the experiences and views of Chelsea supporters.

E: [chair@chelseasupporterstrust.com](mailto:chair@chelseasupporterstrust.com)

Here's to a much happier season ahead.

Best Wishes,

Dom Rosso - Chelsea Supporters' Trust, Chairman



## **Police Operation Following Charlton AFC v Chelsea FC**

Following concerns raised by supporters after our FA Cup tie at Charlton, the CST and fellow supporter groups secured a formal response from the Metropolitan Police.

The Met acknowledged shortcomings in communication, welfare provision and planning, and has committed to a number of improvements for future fixtures.

The CST will continue to ensure these lessons are acted upon.

[Click here for more.](#)



### **60 Years of The Shed**

This September marks 60 years since the Fulham Road end at Stamford Bridge became known as The Shed.

To celebrate, the Chelsea Heritage Partnership is collecting supporter memories ahead of a special *Those Were the Days* event on **12 September**, with video and written submissions welcomed from fans across the generations.

[Click here for more.](#)

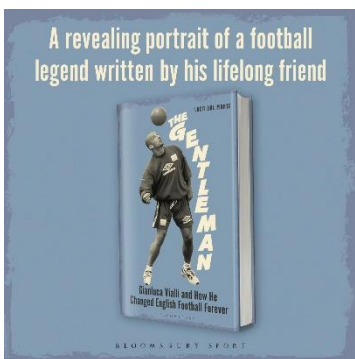


### **Join Us for the CST AGM**

The CST Annual General Meeting takes place online via Zoom at **12pm on Saturday 29 August**. Members are encouraged to join us to hear updates from the Trust, take part in the meeting and put questions to the Board.

Full joining details and the Zoom registration link are available below.

[Click here to register and attend.](#)



### **Discount Code: The Gentleman - Gianluca Vialli**

Bloomsbury has published *The Gentleman – Gianluca Vialli and how he changed English football forever*, an intimate new biography written by Vialli's close childhood friend Luca Dal Monte. CST members can receive **20% off** the book by using the discount code **CST20** at checkout.

[Click here for more.](#)

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### **Have Your Say On Football Heritage**

Fair Game has launched a national survey asking supporters what football heritage means to them and what aspects of their club and supporter culture should be protected. The findings will help inform a report to MPs and contribute to debate around how the Independent Football Regulator safeguards football heritage.

**[Click here to take the survey.](#)**