



Chelsea Supporters' Trust Newsletter - May 2021

Chairman's Introduction

A very warm welcome to the May edition of the Chelsea Supporters' Trust newsletter, especially to the significant number of Chelsea supporters who have joined us over the past few weeks. The support of our members is greatly appreciated.

I hope that you have had an opportunity to become familiar with the CST board and taken a look at our website where you will find further details about the Trust including; how we operate, our aims and our current activities. You will also find details regarding membership involvement in annual board elections, membership surveys and our General Meetings.

The primary focus of this newsletter is the rapidly formulated and successfully implemented campaign against the much-reviled European Super League (ESL). When the CST was set up, we knew that further down the road there would be crises that could not be predicted but would need a quick, positive intervention on behalf of supporters. That crisis duly arrived on Sunday 18th following the disgraceful reports that Chelsea FC were joining the ESL.

The past two weeks have been the busiest since when the CST was founded in 2012. This work has included understanding what was proposed, formulating a position, responding on social media and in the traditional media, and working with the Football Supporters Association and other trusts from the self-appointed 'Big Six' to formulate common positions and common messages.

The CST board is really proud of how our comments, statements and interviews have landed. We have featured in all of the major newspapers in the UK and our statements have been carried worldwide. Board members have made a series of television and radio interviews and these have been broadcast on Sky News/Sky Sports, BBC and ITV. Our social media impact since the ESL story broke has been considerable. Our statements have had over 5 million impressions and 800,000 engagements on Twitter. We had a record number of visits to our website. Please see a full copy of statements issued [here](#).

The past few weeks have been challenging yet rewarding. I hope that the CST can use this momentum to ensure that meaningful change is made. The announcement that CFC would elect supporter advisors to attend board meetings is a big step in the right direction and we are proud that the CST was instrumental in this decision.

Finally, the CST would like to congratulate Emma Hayes and her team for their outstanding performance vs. Munich on Sunday. The inspired performance was a testament to the grit and determination they demonstrated across the two legs. Additionally, at the time of writing, Tomas Tuchel is preparing his squad for the second leg of their semi-final. What an amazing achievement it would be to have both the men and women in their respective finals. "Que Será, Será...."

As many of you know I have recently spent eight days in hospital with a gallstones problem, I am home now and recovering well. I want to thank all of the CST board members and co opted members

for their hard work during the last two weeks. I hope you all agree they did a wonderful job. I'd also like to thank everyone for their very kind messages to me.

Thank you for your continued support and I hope that you and your family continue to stay safe.

Cliff Auger
Chair, Chelsea Supporters' Trust.

EGM Report

The CST board called an Extraordinary General Meeting on Saturday 24th April via Zoom. All voting members were invited and were given an extensive overview of how the board had responded to the news regarding the Super League by vice-chair, Dom Rosso. It was fantastic to have so many new and returning members in attendance as it is important to establish an open dialogue on these matters with our membership. Members of the CST board answered questions on a wide variety of issues. Any questions which were not verbally answered during the meeting, will be followed up in writing and the response shall be published shortly.

Members Survey on ESL

With 96% of the vote, the following motion has been passed and adopted by the CST.

The CST strongly rebuke Chelsea FC for their planned involvement in the failed European Super League. This venture threatened the club's legacy and reputation and has damaged the club's leadership's standing with supporters.

The CST board will seek to hold the club to account for its actions on this matter and will seek a meaningful statement on how the club intends to rebuild its relationship with supporters and involve them more fully, effectively and intrinsically going forward.

The CST board is further mandated to oppose, using all means available to it, any future attempts to exit existing sporting structures without the agreement of key stakeholders, with supporters at the forefront.

Full results of this motion and subsequent questions can be found [here](#).

Chelsea FC to introduce supporter presence at club board

The Chelsea Supporters' Trust (CST) welcomes the recent announcement by Chelsea FC (CFC). CFC has announced that three elected supporter advisors will attend club board meetings from July 1st to ensure general supporter sentiment is considered in the decision making-process.

Chelsea FC becomes the first 'big 6' club to appoint supporter advisors and we hope that this will prevent any catastrophic decisions from being made again.

The CST has been instrumental in ensuring that this level of change has occurred, it has been an objective of the Trust since our inception and we are proud that our club is staying true to its word

and will ensure that meaningful change is implemented. The CST would like to emphasise that supporter presence must be more than simply a box-ticking exercise and we urge the club to listen, consult and react to supporters' views.

Those who are elected must be representative of all supporters and the CST looks forward to consulting with CFC to ensure that the best representatives are elected. We hope that all details of the process are agreed with supporters.

This decision is a big step in the right direction.

Other Issues

Badges for new voting members

The announcement of the, now doomed ESL by the club has seen a fantastic level of new voting members join the Trust. We thank you for your support.

The CST was formed to ensure that your voices are heard, so hopefully you can feel justifiably proud that you played your part.

The upshot of the sheer numbers of new members, is that we need to get more badges manufactured as we have run out ! This is going to take a bit of time. Once we do get the badges made, we will then get them posted. In normal times, we would have been sending out your badge immediately, but as we wait for the badges to be made, this is going to take a lot longer than normal.

We appreciate your patience and hope you understand the exceptional situation.

We will be in touch again when we have a clearer picture of delivery.

Fan-led Review of Football

One welcome by-product of the ESL betrayal has been the government taking a keen interest in football governance. To this end, a Fan-Led Review has been set up by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, to be led by Tracey Crouch, ex-Culture Secretary and avid football supporter. This is long overdue and will hopefully significantly increase supporter involvement in club decisions. The CST will be working with the Football Supporters Association and other trusts to ensure appropriate, comprehensive and detailed input to this review.

A link to the terms of reference :-

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-announces-terms-of-reference-for-fan-led-review-of-football>

Stoll Update

As you may have seen, the recent 'Big Virtual Sleep Out' raised a superb £16,000 for The Stoll foundation. More details here. Thank you to everyone who took part, and everyone who donated.

<https://chelseasupporterstrust.com/15468-the-big-virtual-stamford-bridge-sleep-out-2021-update/>

Ticket Pricing

The club ticket price freeze, and retention on the existing ticket categories for 2021/22 is a sensible move by the club with so much supporter unrest. It is also welcome at a time when so many supporters have suffered pandemic-related financial hardship. However, according to reports, this U-turn from their original plan is due to the reaction of supporters to recent events and it has to asked how the club ever thought could justify a rise after a pandemic?

<https://www.chelseafc.com/en/news/2021/04/23/general-admission-season-ticket-and-matchday-pricing-frozen>

FA Cup Final 2021

At the time of writing, we are still awaiting confirmation of ticket arrangements for the FA Cup Final. Please visit our website/Twitter/Facebook for further updates.

Rail Seating at Stamford Bridge

Chelsea FC have also announced that they will be installing 'Rail Seating' in the Shed Upper and Matthew Harding Lower. The introduction of 'Rail Seating' is significant progress. The CST has campaigned tirelessly for the introduction of Safe Standing (in some variation). To clarify, this is 'Rail Seating' and constant standing is still prohibited in UK football grounds, however, the new investment will ensure that supporters are safe at Stamford Bridge in moments of excitement and is a significant step in the right direction.

Current and former members of the CST board have been instrumental in bringing a variation of this type of seating into stadia and have campaigned tirelessly for the past 20 years. The CST will continue to work closely with the club and other authorities on this issue going forward. Full article to follow.

SGM with Pat Nevin

On 20th March, the CST welcomed former player Pat Nevin to our Special General Meeting. An afternoon which was filled with insight and entertainment which was enjoyed by all. Our first virtual SGM and we wish to thank Pat for giving his afternoon.

Pat's new book The Accidental Footballer can pre pre-ordered using the link below.

https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/1913183378/ref=cm_sw_r_cp_api_fabc_STVA663E32M8D3RZ0ZKJ

Peter Bonetti's International Cap

As mentioned within the Brighton (H) programme, the CST promoted and supported the efforts of a group, led by Hilary Hannington, to raise enough funds to buy an international cap awarded to Peter Bonetti. The group were successful in their efforts and bought the cap at auction. It was subsequently returned to Bonetti's family who have loaned the cap to the Chelsea Museum (See below).

