



## Chelsea Supporters' Trust Newsletter - May 2022

### Chairman's Introduction

*The first thing to say, clearly, is that the appalling events that have continued to take place in Ukraine over the past few months continue to put everything else, including football, into perspective.*

**Cliff Auger**

**Chair, Chelsea Supporters' Trust.**

### Club Ownership

*It would be an understatement to say that a lot has happened with regard to Chelsea FC since our last members newsletter in late March, and the Chelsea Supporters' Trust (CST) board has been actively engaged and involved across a range of key issues. This newsletter is designed to bring all of our members up to speed with where we are, though of course events are fast moving so it is always worth keeping an eye on our social media accounts (listed at the end of this newsletter) to see the latest news.*

*During the bidding process for the ownership of the club, CST board members had ongoing dialogue (face to face and/or virtually) with all four shortlisted bidders, stressing the points we made in our open letter to bidders of March 15th. We raised a number of questions, and we answered a number of questions. We also had dialogue with the parties behind the Ratcliffe bid, which of course was submitted extremely late in the process. Much of this dialogue with bidders has by necessity been unpublicised, because of confidentiality requirements. We made it clear upfront to all parties that we would not be endorsing any individual bid.*

*CST board members have given numerous face-to-face and virtual press, TV and radio interviews, to both UK and international-based media, over the last couple of months as interest in the ownership issue has been both significant and consistent. This included a media 'open session' close to the ground before the Newcastle game. At times of intense interest in the club, as with the proposed Super League last year, it is the CST the media regularly turn to for analysis and comment on Chelsea supporter issues.*

*We have maintained a good and mutually beneficial working relationship with the Chelsea Pitch Owners board during the bidding process and look forward to productively working with them in the future. Once again, we would remind CST members of the criticality of Chelsea Pitch Owners as a safeguard in terms of the football club staying at Stamford Bridge, and ask that anyone interested in buying a share click on this link <https://www.chelseafc.com/en/cpo/buy-a-share>.*

*The past couple of months have been a time of great uncertainty for Chelsea supporters. It was clearly crucial for all those with a passion for the club that a preferred bidder was identified as soon as practicable, accepting the fundamental importance of an effective bid review taking place. As a board we welcome the Boehly team to Chelsea FC. We hope and expect that they will adhere to commitments made, and hope that their tenure is a fruitful and successful one for the club and its supporters. Following the ownership announcement in the small hours of May 7th, The CST board issued a statement.*

*"The CST board welcome the news that terms have been agreed for the Todd Boehly led consortium to acquire Chelsea FC. We will continue to hold close discussions with the prospective owners. We are optimistic about the future of Chelsea FC. We hope that the sale is completed swiftly."*

*We believe we have built a relationship of mutual respect with key figures from the Boehly team and look forward to a productive working relationship with them going forward.*

*At the time of writing, final approval for the sale of the club had still not been given. Given this, the impending 31st May deadline for the sale of Chelsea FC and the potential impact on the sustainability of the club if that deadline was not met, the CST board recently wrote to appropriate DCMS ministers and the Chancellor Of The Exchequer. We asked them to do all in their power to expedite the sale of the club to the Boehly team as soon as practicable.*

## Fan Led Review Of Football Governance

*The government gave broad support to the finding of the Fan Led Review Of Football Governance on April 25th and the CST board put out a statement (below) welcoming this and stressing the imperative of the new Chelsea owner (unknown at that stage) implementing the key findings. We look forward to working with the new owners to ensure that this is the case.*



The Chelsea Supporters' Trust notes the Government response issued yesterday (25 April) in response to the *Fan Led Review of Football Governance*.

The Government's broad support for the recommendations of the Fan Led Review is encouraging. However, we fully support the Football Supporters' Association's response and we urge the Government to "move fast and implement the fan-led review recommendations now."

Initiatives that safeguard football for the supporters must not be allowed to be kicked into the long grass by the football authorities and club owners/executives.

The direction of travel is clear - the new owners of Chelsea FC must lead the way in demonstrating their commitment to our supporters. They must do this by implementing the relevant recommendations of the Fan Led Review as part of the takeover, including:

- Supporters are given a legally-binding say on matters of club heritage – including the stadium, club name and crest, and participation in new sporting competitions, through the issuing of a golden share;
- A continued commitment to Chelsea FC Women;
- The creation of a Shadow Board of supporters to advise the Chelsea FC Board.

Any new owner must additionally commit to continuing the legacy of the Chelsea Foundation. They must demonstrate how they will run an inclusive & diverse football club.

The CST remains in dialogue with the three remaining bidders. All bidders have been presented with a detailed proposal for how these recommendations can be implemented.

All bidders have responded positively to such matters throughout our dialogue, and it is now for the winning bid to deliver in order to build a successful and sustainable future for Chelsea, with strong governance and supporters' interests at the heart of it.

## Members Tickets for Premier League Games

*The prevention of the club being able to sell tickets for members for Premier League games is inconsistent, unfair and indefensible. Given this, we put out a statement on May 9th making this point and sent it to relevant decision makers in the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). It is a point we have already made in the past weeks to the DCMS and the club, though the latter are of course largely powerless in this regard.*



Terms have been agreed for the by Todd Boehly led consortium to acquire Chelsea FC, subject to all necessary regulatory approvals.

The logic of preventing Chelsea members from purchasing tickets for home Premier League games, therefore, becomes even more tenuous. Allowing sales of FA Cup and Champions League tickets, but not those for Premier League, was an irrational decision and punished loyal supporters from attending League home fixtures.

Given the significant change in circumstances reflected in the ownership announcement, **The Chelsea Supporters' Trust board calls on the DCMS to immediately amend the 'special licence',** and for tickets to Chelsea's last two home games this season to be sold by the club to members.

***Supporters must not be punished.***

## FA Cup Final Ticket Allocation

*Despite the disappointing result, we were pleased to see that Chelsea received over 32,000 tickets for the FA Cup Final. The allocation has increased over recent seasons, partly as a result of ongoing campaigning by the CST and other supporter trusts, under the auspices of the Football Supporters Association (FSA). To put this in context, for the 1970 final Chelsea and Leeds got well under 20,000 tickets for the Wembley game and in the 1930s each finalist, remarkably, received just 10,000.*

*Everything in the FA Cup Final garden was not rosy, however. The ticket pricing, predictably, was outrageous, the Football Association shamelessly exploiting supporter desire to watch their team in a cup final. As the finalist allocation has gone up in recent years, so has the price of tickets. This inexorable rise cannot be allowed to continue, especially at a time when so many people are struggling financially. We will be working with the FSA and other trusts to try and ensure a price freeze for this showpiece occasion.*

## Big Stamford Bridge Sleep Out 2022

*Despite the event being confirmed just a week before hand, because of uncertainty about the impact of sanctions, the Big Stamford Bridge Sleep Out 2022 held in March was a tremendous success. Money raised more than matched the two previous Sleep Out events, which is enormously pleasing, especially given the circumstances.*



*A cheque for £22,398.96, a fantastic figure, was presented on the pitch before the Wolves home game to Chris Webber of Stoll by CST member Diana Jupp, one of the Sleep Out participants. In the last three years we have raised*

*£52,000 for Stoll and another £13,500 for the Glass Door homeless charity. We think that is something we can all be really proud of.*



*Thank you to everyone who took part and everyone who donated. Your generosity is much appreciated and will help our friends at Stoll in their crucial work supporting homeless veterans. We aim to hold a fourth such event next winter and will give members details in good time once arrangements have been finalised.*

## CST Emergency General Meeting

*The CST board propose to hold a virtual Emergency General Meeting (EGM) in the near future, giving elected members the chance to have their say as we move forward at this crucial time in the club's 117-year history. We will notify voting members once a suitable date has been identified and send out appropriate links to allow you to participate.*

## CST Board Membership

*The CST is, as its core value, a democratic organisation, the board elected by the membership to serve that membership. As every year since the CST was formed in 2012, there will be a board election process this summer. We believe it is valuable to have an ongoing flow of new board members, bringing fresh ideas and impetus. We only have two members who have been elected to the board continually since its inception a decade ago, and we see this as a healthy situation, preventing priorities, thinking and stakeholder relationships becoming too predictable and cosy. The work can be time-consuming and demanding (witness the last couple of months) but we believe it is both worthwhile and essential and can be extremely interesting and satisfying.*

*If any CST voting member is potentially interesting in standing for the board, they are very welcome to contact us at [secretary@chelseasupporterstrust.com](mailto:secretary@chelseasupporterstrust.com) to understand more about what is involved.*

## New CST Members

*We have had a recent surge in CST membership and would like to welcome all our new members. Because of the sheer volume of new members, it may take a little while to post your badges out. We needed to get more badges produced, which have only just been delivered. Please bear with us, we are aiming to get as many as possible dispatched to new members in the next few weeks.*

*Thank you for your patience.*

*If you have not already received your badge and have moved, please let us know your new address as soon as possible so it is shipped to the right place. To let us know of your new address, please email [membership@chelseasupporterstrust.com](mailto:membership@chelseasupporterstrust.com)*

## Contact Us / Follow Us

*If you have any queries on any of the above, please :*

*email us at [enquiries@chelseasupporterstrust.com](mailto:enquiries@chelseasupporterstrust.com).*

*Follow us on:*

*Twitter [@ChelseaSTrust](https://twitter.com/ChelseaSTrust)*

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