



CHELSEA SUPPORTERS' TRUST NEWSLETTER – WINTER 2018

Chairman's Report

Welcome to the 'winter' newsletter. We hope you all had a good Christmas and New Year and are managing to keep warm in the bitter winter weather. Mind you, if you read the press at the moment it might make you hot under the collar with Chelsea apparently in crisis and about to part company with Antonio Conte, in spite of being 4th in the league, in the FA Cup and with Barcelona to play in the Champions' League (correct at time of writing!). Crisis, what crisis?

And so to business...

Special General Meeting

We held a Special General Meeting on October 21st after the Watford match in the Atlas Pub.

The meeting was well attended, not least as our special guest was Pat Nevin. The Agenda covered subjects uppermost in Chelsea Supporters minds including the issue of Kick-Off times and their re-scheduling for TV, covered by Tim Rolls. In addition Ramzi Shammass discussed the recent Annual Survey and plans for the survey this year; Cliff Auger discussed supporter's issues and the recent unveiling of the Jack Whitley Memorial and plans for further work with Brompton Cemetery and Henry Fowler presented an update on our efforts with the campaign for Safe Standing.



Charles Rose, Chairman, Chelsea Pitch Owners also presented an update of the CPO's recent activities. CST members were also given the chance to ask questions to the board. Afterward, Pat Nevin provided us with a highly informative and entertaining Q&A and reminded us, as if we needed reminding, of what a gentleman he is by staying on and talking to members, taking photos and signing autographs.

The meeting was recorded and can be heard in full [here](#) and the Pat Nevin Q&A can be heard [here](#).

By now we would hope to be announcing our next Special General Meeting. However, due to the ever changing fixture times it is currently impossible. Our preference is to hold SGM's on a match day, preferably after a lunchtime or 3.00 pm kick off on a Saturday or Sunday. You will no doubt be aware that during February and March, there are no Chelsea home fixtures at these times and as a result we cannot hold a meeting at a convenient time for all.

It seems that the Premier League and the Broadcasters are not just content to disrupt and inconvenience supporters travelling to matches, they are also out to disrupt the CST's ability to hold meetings. The issue of Kick Off times is something which the Trust is actively engaged in and will continue to argue the case going forward. More on this later.

Meetings with Chelsea FC

In November, Cliff Auger, Ramzi Shammass, Chris Rayburn and I, met with Bruce Buck, Chairman Chelsea FC and several key executives of the club.

This was our first opportunity to present the results of the annual survey which we discussed in detail. Other issues and concerns raised included the Stamford Bridge redevelopment; temporary move away from the Bridge; Away ticket allocation and loyalty point benchmarking; Kick off times and TV scheduling; Safe Standing.

These meetings remain an important opportunity to maintain and continue constructive dialogue with the Club on the issues that you the membership bring to our attention via the Annual Survey, meetings, email and in person with various Board members.

In addition to the formal meetings, we continue to have informal meetings with the club on ad hoc issues throughout the year.

Annual Survey 2018

The Chelsea Supporters' Trust has run an annual survey of its membership each year for the last five years. It provides a crucial benchmark and snapshot of what Chelsea Supporters think about the club they support on key issues such as the running of the Club; ticket prices and access; kick-off times; loyalty points; the stadium redevelopment and temporary move and atmosphere.

Ramzi Shammass is currently putting together the questions that will form the basis of this years' Survey with a view to the Board approving in March. We aim to release the Survey sometime in April, before the end of the season, which is earlier than we have in the past. The reason for this is that many of the issues in the Survey will perhaps be fresher in member's minds. Also, football rather than summer holidays will be at the top of your mind!



The survey results are also sent to the Club and the media and we usually receive positive media coverage as a result.

The results of this survey are discussed in a meeting with members of the Chelsea FC board with a view to influencing how the club deal with the issues that matter to supporters most. In addition, the survey results provide a mandate to the Trust that is a true representation of supporters' views by enabling us to know how you feel about the core issues affecting the Club and to track your concerns. It is arguably the most important thing that the Trust does each year to 'make your voice heard' so make sure you take part and complete it!

Membership Administration and Recruitment

Having co-opted Rob Palmer, Paul Hay and Lucy Caton to the Board in the summer they have been working very hard on getting to grips with the administration of the membership and putting a plan together to grow the membership.

Paul is cleaning up our membership database and making sure your membership subscriptions are up to date and renewals are a seamless process. If you have any membership queries, you can reach Paul by emailing membership@chelseasupporterstrust.com

Rob has big plans to grow the membership – vital if we are to increase our influence with the club on the issues important to you. Some of Rob's ideas include a new Membership card for each member; a CST presence on a match day; meeting with affiliate members and supporter groups; match day leafleting to increase awareness of the Trust.

We are exploring several options to have a match day presence, where you can come and meet with the guys on the board ... a simple hello or to discuss any supporter related issues that would benefit from our involvement. If you can help with this; for example, maybe you have a front garden or terrace on the Fulham Road or any other creative solutions, please get in touch.

Some help with our website would be appreciated. If there are any members out there, who are familiar with WordPress and can donate a couple of hours a month, we would love to hear from you.

If you can help with your time and expertise let us know. Email enquiries@chelseasupporterstrust.com or Rob at robpalmer@chelseasupporterstrust.com

Anyone is welcome to join the Chelsea Supporters' Trust and it's easy to do and free!

Anybody can join for free and be a non-voting member, and we are pleased to have you onboard. However, for those who are non-voting members, please consider converting your membership to a voting one where you will receive the benefit of voting on our resolutions and mandate, as well as the ability to stand and vote for the Trust board every year. And not forgetting our special pin badge that all new voting members receive. Please go to our web site link above. All this for just £5 a year! Just go to the sign up page and click the subscribe button, you do not have to enter your details again.

Voting members, please consider setting up an automatic subscription through PayPal. This is both easier for us to administer as well as ensuring your membership doesn't lapse. You can do this via our web site here; just skip to the payment options at the foot of the page.

If you have any queries on any aspect of your membership, please email us at membership@chelseasupporterstrust.com. Please allow us adequate time to reply to your email if one is required.

David Chidgey
Chairman, Chelsea Supporters' Trust

Supporter Issues

Premier League Structured Dialogue

Tim Rolls continues to represent the Chelsea Supporters' Trust on the Premier League Trusts Group that meets regularly to discuss issues of concern for supporters.

Tim is attending a meeting of Premier League Fans Group hosted by the Football Supporters Federation in Manchester in February. The discussions will focus on subjects including: VAR; Restricted views at matches; the forthcoming Structured Dialogue meeting with the Premier League in March; the new Broadcast deal and supporter concerns; progress on Safe Standing and the issues around Kick Off times.

In October, Tim Rolls as CST's representative and Supporter representatives from every top-flight club met with Premier League executives in the third Premier League Structured Dialogue meeting to discuss a range of issues - including TV impact on the fixture schedule. Notes from the meeting can be read [here](#).

At the meeting Tim discussed the issues with Fixture Scheduling and Kick Off times directly with Richard Scudamore and in addition suggested the inconsistencies at grounds at present about what can be taken in or not were not helpful. For example, cameras are an issue at some and not at others; iPads and phone chargers are issues at some and not others. Much better communication was needed with away fans, especially.

Fans Forum

Chris Rayburn has attended the two Fans Forum meetings held this season and an additional meeting to discuss the Anti-Semitism initiative.

Fans Forum – 18th September 2017

The opening Fans forum meeting of the season was largely focused on the stadium development, with the club providing insight into the latest status and their plans, both for the new stadium and a temporary stadium. The timing of the move was discussed, and the club is keen to do as much as possible to ensure that supporters will attend matches at the temporary stadium. No definitive decision has been taken as to where this will be, with the clubs investigating a number of potential sites, but clearly Wembley is a major contender.

Concerns were raised over changes made to both the layout and the range of merchandise in the Megastore since Nike took it over in the summer. The club were sympathetic to supporters concerns and will take up many of these issues with Nike.

The forum was told about the clubs' concern about the use of the "Y" word in a song about Alvaro Morata that was sung by many in the away end at Leicester and was highlighted by the media following the game. The club had previously announced that supporters who were spotted on CCTV singing this would be banned. Fans Forum members supported by the Supporters Trust have suggested that many are using the term without realising that it is offensive to many Jewish people and that the use of the "Y" word by Tottenham supporters clouds this issue. It was proposed that liaison with the Holocaust Education Trust might help educate supporters and those who may receive bans might be able to get them reduced were they to attend some awareness education.

Fans Forum – 15th November 2017

The Second meeting of the season is mainly dedicated to discussing ticketing issues. The Supporters Trust distributed the away ticket benchmarking study that was prepared by Tim Rolls, to Club representatives and other Fans Forum representatives. Following sharing information with other Supporters groups this study compared the methodology used by the top six Premier League teams to allocate tickets for away games and made a number of recommendations to the club.

Tim's benchmarking study can be read [here](#).

The Trust also brought several points to the Clubs attention that had been raised by members in recent months. Many of these related to how loyalty points were allocated and used, which games they applied to and the Season Ticket Holder versus Member split (forum members voted that this remains at 60 ST/40 Member).

Other issues included the suggestion of carrying over LPs from previous season(s), allowing ST holders with multiple ST's to designate one person per ST to attend Euro away games rather than only the named holder and cup ticket allocations.

Many attendees expressed their frustration at touting around Stamford Bridge and the lack of visible measures to stop the large numbers of touts who congregate around Fulham Broadway. The Trust also put forward a proposal to allow people with last minute spares to have a place designated to sell them at face value near the ground. Other issues included merchandising since the handover of the Megastore to Nike. Some objections that had been raised at the previous meeting had been addressed.

Fans forum minutes can be found [here](#)

Anti- Semitism initiative

Fans Forum members were recently introduced to the Chelsea Foundation's Building Bridges anti-Semitism initiative that was rolled out at the Bournemouth game, which fell close to Holocaust Memorial Day.

Chelsea FC feels that the time is right to spearhead a long-term awareness programme targeted at all football supporters. Materials used in support of Chelsea's initiative will be made available to a wide range of other sports clubs to copy.

The programme is ambitious and may even involve some supporters being offered the opportunity to learn more about the history of anti-Semitism through club sponsored educational trips to historical locations such as former concentration camps. The club has made it very clear from the owner down that these chants are not welcome at Stamford Bridge and will not be tolerated.

Train Travel back from Liverpool

In November, some 150 Chelsea supporters were left stranded at Liverpool South Parkway station when the chartered train elected not to wait for two busloads of supporters returning from Anfield and pulled out of the station.

Thomas Cook Sports, who have the contract to transport Chelsea supporters to and from away matches, by all accounts, exceeded themselves in terms of ignorance and incompetence that night. Little or no communication was provided, let alone food and water and then a litany of disinformation before a coach and a bus were provided to rescue the stranded supporters. Even then the already chaotic evening descended in to high farce when not enough busses were sent which meant that some supporters were still left at what was by now a freezing cold station. Many didn't get home to London until 8.00 am in the morning having spent an uncomfortable 5 hour journey on busses not really fit for that purpose.

A Chelsea Supporters' Trust board member was one of the supporters left at the station, contacted the executives at the Club and corralled evidence from the supporters affected. As a result and to their credit, the Club were very quick to offer compensation to those affected: £230 to cover the inconvenience and the match ticket.

We sympathise with any of our members who experienced difficulties as a result of these travel arrangements and thank you for your detailed submissions which we were able to take to the Club.

We have been assured that the Club will undertake a proper investigation with Thomas Cook Sport resulting hopefully, in a report and action plan so that what happened at Liverpool can be avoided in the future.

In our view it highlights the need to review the role of the Club's Supporters Liaison Officer. Under UEFA guidelines and according to the Football Supporters Federation website, Club SLO's are encouraged to "travel to the game with the fans and be on hand should any problems arise" and "after the game the away SLO will monitor the situation for fans leaving the stadium and again intervene if a problem arises."

Having someone attached to the Club on the ground and among the fans when issues like this arise would be welcome. Sadly, according to the latest Chelsea Supporter's Trust survey, only 30% of those surveyed are aware of the SLO role, with 8% knowing how to contact them and a mere 6 % actually knowing who Chelsea's SLO is.

Clearly there is some work to do here and the Supporters' Trust is more than happy to help in this respect.

If any good is to come out of the almighty inconvenience suffered by Chelsea's long suffering away support in that instance, then it is to be hoped that there will be no repeat and at the very least better communication and organisation on the ground between the club, the travel operator and supporters.

Away Match Travel

And talking of getting back home from away matches...

Last year, Chelsea Supporters Trust launched an initiative to assist supporters using subsidised transport, which Chelsea F.C. generously provides, to reach home. Many supporters have significant journeys to make when coaches or trains arrive back at Stamford Bridge or mainline rail stations and this can be particularly difficult following evening games, where connecting rail or tube services may be unavailable.

Using Twitter, CST would like to help facilitate contact between supporters who may be able to share lifts or taxis to their homes. To take part, we suggest supporters use the following hashtags:

Those on the club train: #cfctrain **then add their preferred destination**

Those travelling on club coaches: #cfccoach **then add coach number and preferred destination**

For example someone on the club train looking to share transport towards Sutton after a game up North could tweet "#cfctrain Sutton". People travelling towards nearby locations can then connect via Direct Message (DM) to arrange to meet up. Please note it is necessary for both people to follow each other on Twitter to be able to DM each other.

Hopefully use of these hashtags will help facilitate communication and will make supporters journeys home from the point club transport ends less costly and inconvenient. We appreciate any feedback supporters have of ways to improve this service!

Don't forget to follow us on twitter [@ChelseaSTrust](#) and Instagram [CST Instagram](#)

Affiliations

Chelsea Pitch Owners AGM

There was a good turn out from Chelsea Supporters' Trust Board members at the Chelsea Pitch Owners AGM held in January.

Much of the debate focused on the progress of the plans for the redevelopment of Stamford Bridge, a move to a temporary stadium and how the CPO is working with Chelsea FC to facilitate this.

All of the resolutions were passed with the requisite majorities. The shareholders resolved to adjust the base value of CPO shares to £25. The full results and the statement that Charles Rose, Chair of CPO made to the meeting can be viewed [here](#)

If you would like to buy a CPO share you can do so [here](#)

Chelsea Pensioner

We would like to give a warm welcome to new affiliate members, [The Chelsea Pensioner](#) the second closest pub to Stamford Bridge.



It's a great match day pub and Kitchen next to Stamford Bridge and is home to the best (and loudest!) Chelsea Fans on match days, but more important the Chelsea Pensioner kindly allows the CST to use the pub for all of our Board meetings.

If you belong to a Chelsea Supporters Group – official or unofficial, in the UK or Overseas – and you would like to become affiliate members of the Chelsea Supporters' Trust then please email: enquiries@chelseasupporterstrust.com for information on how to join. The annual fee is £25 and as well as the membership benefits of full voting rights in the annual Board and Motion elections, anyone from your group will be entitled to attend our meetings. Alternatively join up through the website here and select Affiliate on the Annual Membership type button

We remain keen to engage more effectively with official supporters groups and affiliates by going out around the country to meet with supporters groups who would like to know more about what we do and raise issues that are of concern to their members. If your supporters group would like to host a Q&A with us at one of your meetings then please contact davidchidzey@chelseasupporterstrust.com

Community

Brompton Clean-Up Group

The International break in November 2017 provided the Brompton Cemetery grave tending group with our last opportunity before winter to work on the Chelsea related memorials.

The graves were once again tidied and flowering bulbs were planted around them. It is hoped that the flowers will be in full bloom in Spring 2018 and hopefully by March 10th when we have events planned for "Founders Day."

We have continued to work with Rick Glanvill, the official Chelsea FC historian, Brompton cemetery management and Chelsea FC with our ongoing ventures at the cemetery and have a number of future initiatives planned.

The first event that we are pleased to announce is an enhanced guided tour of the Chelsea FC related graves by Rick Glanvill. The tour will take place on March 10th prior to the home game against Crystal Palace. The date is, of course, the anniversary of the formation of Chelsea FC, so the tour will finish with a wreath laid at the Mears memorial within the cemetery. For those wishing to attend, the tour group will meet at the newly built visitor's centre which is situated just inside the gates at the north end (West Brompton) of the cemetery at 12.15pm. This entrance is 5 minutes' walk from West Brompton station.

If you would like to join the Trust's Clean Up Group who tend to the Chelsea related graves several times a year then please contact us by email: enquiries@chelseasupporterstrust.com

Food Banks Initiative

Following the enormous success of our collections for the Hammersmith and Fulham foodbank before Christmas - A big thank you to supporters who donated food and money at our collections - we had hoped to carry on with them in the New Year. Unfortunately, due to unforeseen circumstances we have not yet been able to do so. However, things are now moving forwards and the collections will, hopefully, recommence in the next month or so. Work is going on with management at Chelsea FC and it is hoped they will be able to help out logistically.

Before Christmas we collected over 220kgs of food and over £100 in cash. When the foodbank provides food for a family of four for ten meals this weighs 20kgs so this means our food donations have been able to support at least 11 families. Please look out for further news on future collections.

The Foodbank gives three days of emergency food to local individuals and families in crisis. As well as receiving 3 days' supply of food, clients who attend any of the 3 foodbanks in the local area also receive professional advice and a listening ear.

For further information about Hammersmith and Fulham Food Bank, visit their [website](#) or find them on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

