



## Chelsea Supporters' Trust



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Dear Member,

Due to the ongoing and everchanging situation surrounding the future of Chelsea Football Club and the increased operation of the Chelsea Supporters' Trust (CST), the CST Board thought it would be useful to set out exactly who we are, the actions we have taken over recent weeks and our rationale.

The CST is the largest democratic and legally constituted Chelsea supporters' group, with members in over 130 countries. We hold yearly board elections, and our 9 elected board members are given a mandate to represent the membership of the CST. It is open to any member to stand for election and we always encourage new applicants. All board and official positions on the Trust are entirely voluntary and no-one in the Trust has ever received financial recompense for their work on the Trust. The vast majority of us balance representing the best interests of the membership and Chelsea supporters with full-time jobs, families and other personal commitments. We do this because we care deeply about Chelsea, its supporters, heritage, history and future.

The CST board stands with the people of Ukraine. The concerns we as Chelsea supporters are currently facing are inconsequential when taken alongside the appalling suffering of the Ukrainian people at the hands of Vladimir Putin.

However, the past few weeks have been a deeply unsettling time for Chelsea supporters. We understand this and have therefore attempted to provide leadership and guidance during this difficult period. We have been successful in ensuring the views of supporters have been heard publicly – with regard to the future ownership and on more pressing issues such as ticketing and charity & community events. *We want to do what we can to protect the club from falling into the wrong hands.* We also believe there is an opportunity for supporters to be given a stake in the club in order to protect the club's heritage (most importantly, to prevent an unscrupulous owner from attempting to relocate from Stamford Bridge against supporter and community wishes).

We believe the best way to do that is through the creation of an irrevocable and legally-binding *golden share*. There is no monetary value attached to a *golden share*, and it does not provide economic rights to the holder. A *golden share* would be used to protect heritage items. Our golden share proposal would give supporter representatives a right to veto decisions made on items such as; **the location of the club's stadium, badge, kit colours, name, continued support for Chelsea FC Women** and any proposal to join a new competition such as a **European Super League**, and so enable supporters to protect their club's heritage. Based on the recommendations of the *Fan led*

*review into Football Governance, such a golden share could be held by 'a democratic legally constituted supporter group' such as the CST, and as such, given our position, it is entirely appropriate for the CST to seek to hold this share should we be successful in securing it. We have published a [Q&A document](#) containing more detailed information of our asks.*

The CST Board believes that the best way to secure such protections on behalf of all Chelsea Supporters is by seeking to obtain commitments from all prospective owners. In order to do this, we have called for all prospective owners to reach out to us – and many have. We are pleased to say that we have been successful in securing such commitments from more than one bidder and we believe our expectations should be adopted by all bidders – this would go some way to provide assurance that they have the club's best interests at heart. But perhaps of greater importance than our asks for greater fan representation and protection of the club's heritage, any new owners must share the inclusive views of Chelsea FC and our diverse support base. We will challenge any prospective owner where there are concerns over their commitment to these values.

We appreciate the need to keep our members abreast of developments – we will continue to do this through emails to our members, newsletters, our website and our social media channels. However, the CST Board must emphasise that a number of details regarding our discussions with prospective owners are commercially sensitive. Where we have been asked to treat discussions confidentially, we will respect that. No credible organisation would do otherwise.

To be clear, however, neither the CST nor our Board are kingmakers here. While we are seeking to influence the process, the decision over who Chelsea FC's next owner is will be made by Chelsea, the Raine Group and the UK Government. **The CST has no legal role or direct say on this decision – which is a commercial matter for Chelsea FC which must also be compliant with the sanctions imposed by the UK Government on Roman Abramovich.**

The CST board will continue to do what we can to act in the best interest of Chelsea supporters and, most importantly, you – our membership. We will convene an Extraordinary General Meeting as soon as practicable and, once the sale process is over and there is no risk of us commercially or legally distorting the process, we will provide as much information as we possibly can with you. We will continue to respond to emails and queries. We welcome any offers of support from members.

Finally, we just wanted to thank you for your patience and support over the previous weeks. Let's hope we can move out of this unsettling period and emerge strongly as a club and a supporter base. We will continue to do everything we can to ensure that is the case.

Thank you,

Cliff Auger

Chair

Paul Jeffrey

Secretary

On behalf of the Chelsea Supporters' Trust Board