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Trust board members attend SCFC roadshows and forums, and will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

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**THE BLOSSOMS**  
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it's all about the county Independent County web site



# TRUST TALK

Stockport County Supporters' Trust newsletter  
AUGUST 2006



## A message from Jim Gannon



I'm proud to be Manager of Stockport County. Proud, above all, of the sheer passion of the supporters. You are County. Literally. Because, through the Trust, you own the Club. That's why I'm writing to urge every County fan who isn't already a Trust member to join today. I have, and the players have too. Then, for £12 a year you won't just have an opinion about who runs the club and how it moves forward.

You'll have a vote.

The job we started last year has only just begun. It's now time to kick-start the County revival. There's a lot of hard work ahead and the more Trust members there are, the faster we'll be able to progress.

Thanks for your fantastic support last season, and here's to the future. See you at Edgeley Park.

**Join the Stockport County Supporters' Trust today. Use the form included with this newsletter or join online at: [www.stockportcountytrust.com](http://www.stockportcountytrust.com)**

## Membership Changes

We have listened to what you have been saying and we are happy to announce that we are re-introducing 12 month "rolling" memberships. Members who joined the Trust on or before 1st December 2005 will continue to be asked to renew on the 1st December but the renewal date for members who joined after 1st December 2005 will be on the anniversary of the date they joined.

Coupled with this change we are also planning to send all members a membership card annually, The member's renewal date will be shown on his or her membership card. We hope to start sending out the cards to members sometime in the next few weeks.

## Trust Members Meeting

The Trust held a meeting for its members at The Adswood Hotel on Saturday 8th July. Also intended to serve as a celebration of one year of ownership of the football club, the meeting was an open and informal affair followed by a barbecue.

There followed an open question and answer session and the following were the main points to come out of that:

- Brendan Elwood did own the ground at the point we purchased the club and it was Brendan that separated the club and the ground.
- It is not true that Cheshire Sport have agreed a deal to buy Booth Street.
- After the Trust had spent the first year concentrating on the club George Hudson and Rob Donaldson are in the final stages of identifying roles and responsibilities for all Trust Board members.
- At one point last season a trading loss of £200,000 was projected. Due to an increase in gates and hard work on the commercial side, as of the end of May the club was £86,000 in profit. It must be stressed that this NOT an a year-end figure.
- There are areas which could improve for County on the financial front, including the lottery. The club will be working hard to achieve those improvements and we are confident that people will start to see the results of that by this time next year.
- After reviewing season ticket prices for the coming season, the club is also working on structured process to increase attendance amongst the young people of Stockport and then to keep them through appropriate pricing.
- All the changes are part of a wider plan. We believe that results on and off the pitch are proving it's going the right way.
- The Trust accepted that communication with its members could be improved and this newsletter is one way in which we'll be doing it in future!
- The meeting was a successful event seemingly enjoyed by those who were there. A full report of the meeting is available on the Trust web site.



[www.sunnycyprusvilla.co.uk](http://www.sunnycyprusvilla.co.uk) or call Mark Evans on 07967 477959

## The only way is UP!

Welcome to this, the first of our regular newsletters (not before time!).

In reviewing the last twelve months, I would like to measure our progress against the aims of the Trust and by highlighting the improvements at the football club itself, both on and off the pitch.

Our first aim was to promote the principle of supporters' representation on the board of the club. On this issue we feel we have surpassed expectations, by confronting issues and not shirking from difficult decisions. There have been wholesale changes to the board of Directors with each one now having specific responsibilities to assist the new Managing Director, Keith Agar. By the time you read this article the roles and responsibilities will be in the public domain.

The links between the club and the community have never been stronger (although realising that the practical help council provides is not always apparent). Future developments will show that the partnership between ourselves and the council will be mutually beneficial.

The extremely hard working commercial department within the club has succeeded in not only raising our profile and encouraging the involvement of local business but also contributed to an extremely encouraging years' trading.

The School of Excellence continues to go from strength to strength, as has been shown by an outstanding audit report and, from an encouraging point of view, an ever increasing number of premier ship clubs taking an interest in our younger players. (We will never stand in anyone's way but players will not be allowed to leave "on the cheap").

It is painfully obvious that most football clubs do not follow the usual business principles, and believe that, in some way, football is different. It is not and we should not delude ourselves any longer.

The business in this case is, or rather should be a wide-ranging, community based profitable concern with differing income streams. We have given individual responsibilities on the board to maximise each source of revenue and develop a strategy to grow each part of the business.

We now believe that we have the structures in place to provide the supporters and local community with an enduring and successful football club.

We have only achieved this with your help, and with your continued support, the only way is up.

Thank You!

Stuart Cree, Trust Chairman



Neil Chapman, Dan Levy, Stuart Cree, George Hudson, Norman Beverley, David James, Gary Kimber, Mark Maguire, Rob Donaldson

## The Trust & the Community

The Aims of the Trust oblige us to reach out to all the people of Stockport, and rightly so. This involves not just Trust members, not even just County fans, but everyone who lives in Stockport. Our ambition is to make the community part of the football club and the football club part of the community. We can't do this, though, without having a vibrant, healthy Trust from which to operate. This is what we are currently trying to achieve and maintain.

In terms of the past year, there have been numerous meetings with Stockport Council with regards to outreach into the community, the results of which will be evident in good time. We have also spent time examining and taking advice from other football clubs like Charlton and Brentford who have successfully managed to increase their fanbases by being proactive within their local communities. In addition, we have looked at other sports, in particular Rugby League, where Warrington Wolves have had some very interesting community-based ideas that we have taken on board. All this helps us in our sole aim - to make County the best club it can possibly be.

This has allowed us to implement effective schemes in our own club. One, for example, called Fit To Read, is run via the Trust and is designed to help children at the start of secondary school who have difficulty reading, whilst at the same time hopefully getting them involved in County, thereby helping us (potential to get new fans) and them (they learn to read). This programme has been introduced at three local schools at present, and next year will be rolled out to be on the curriculum of every secondary school in Stockport. Such outreach schemes can be funded through grants that the Trust can access, and the Trust Board is currently in the process of sifting through to find out what's available to us.