

The
Posh Supporters Trust

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The
Posh Supporters Trust

Leigh Porter

Members of Supporters Direct, Cambridgeshire Chamber of Commerce
and Peterborough Council for Voluntary Service

NEWSLETTER No 23

MARCH 2007

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A NEW DISCOUNT FOR TRUST MEMBERS

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The Posh Supporters Trust

P O Box 587, Peterborough PE4 5XL.

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E-mail: theposhtrust@yahoo.co.uk

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Having been short of any proper youth policy for many years, the Posh have decided to adopt one off the field with the youngest chairman and one of the youngest managers in the Football League. Having welcomed Darragh in our last Newsletter, we now warmly welcome Darren Ferguson and really wish him lots of luck, especially as he finds his feet in these early stages of his management career.

It has been a hyperactive time for the club both on and off the field and, like all fans, we hope that, with good funding available, we make good progress on both. The Trust board had a constructive meeting with Darragh Macanthy on the day of the club AGM, and our report of that meeting is shown below. We made a lot of positive proposals, which we also show below, and hope that some or even most of them can be adopted over the coming months. We offered the Trust's help in implementing a number of these proposals – it certainly isn't just a wish list for others to enact by any means. We feel strongly that the club will be healthier and much better off with active supporter involvement in its future and are quite encouraged by Darragh's words on the importance of supporters and of how vital is the club's involvement with the community.

The Trust board have also been talking to the City Council planning authorities to try to ensure that the community (and ultimately, therefore, the club) gets the best possible advantage from the proposal to build the new stand and 135 flats. We have done this by suggesting that Peterborough City Council attaches specific community benefits from the development if it takes place. This is normal procedure under "The Planning Act 1990" in major urban residential developments. Our submissions are part of the file held by the planning office, and we remain in favour of the development taking place. You will also see our final submission to the Planning Committee reproduced in this newsletter.

Away from the intense activity around our club, it is encouraging to see Michel Platini elected as head of UEFA in another move towards much needed reform and improvements in football at a high level. A salary cap in the higher leagues now seems a distinct possibility, and along with other moves to promote the interests of

supporters, the mindset of the authorities, in Europe at least, seems to be getting better. We also continue to see growing support for much better regulation and governance in the British game.

We expect that it's going to be a lively few months until the end of the season – this is “The Posh” after all.

Finally, and with great regret, I have to tell you that Peter Williams, our long-serving and outstanding Secretary, is standing down from the Board after he and his wife Gill decided to start planning to leave the UK and live in Australia. They were founder members of the Trust and took on all the onerous administrative roles at the Trust and handled them with great skill and typical thoroughness. Peter has kindly said that he will remain as Secretary until 30 April. I cannot praise his work and commitment strongly enough and the Board wishes Peter and Gill great happiness and success in the future. We are keen to hear from members and non-members who might be willing to work with the Board in this, or a similar, role.

Best wishes, Peter Lloyd.

TRUST BOARD MEETS THE POSH CHAIRMAN DARRAGH MACANTHONY

After various contacts and meetings with his associates over the previous two months, the Trust finally met the new Posh chairman, Darragh Macanthyony (DM), in the club's boardroom a few hours after the club AGM on 13 December. The Chief Executive Officer, Bob Symns, was also present. Prior to the meeting the Board had forwarded to Darragh a set of proposals for helping the club progress including an event to re-launch the club after the completion of his takeover. [*This document is reproduced in its entirety below.*]

We had a very amicable meeting at which DM was very receptive to us and we believe he was impressed at the depth of preparation and attention to detail we had given to our proposals. Many – not all – of our ideas were accepted. In particular there was agreement about the need for a community director, responsible for activities that should be kept separate from the commercial functions of the club. On the other hand, our suggestions to improve the matchday programme were not popular – we have for many years maintained that it compares badly with almost any other club's offering in terms of feature articles, statistics etc.

Unfortunately the tenor of the meeting changed when Barry Fry (BF) walked in to the boardroom and joined the meeting.

BF challenged the Trust on a variety of issues ranging from the nature of our work

in the club shop to an unsubstantiated allegation of the Trust's conduct as a member of the Peterborough Chamber of Commerce.

Bearing in mind the fact that DM had emphasised from the start of the AGM earlier in the day that the past was finished and he was only interested in the future, we were shocked by BF's outburst. We did not defend ourselves as robustly as, in hindsight, we could have done, but our instinct was not to turn the meeting into a slanging match.

We strongly refuted these allegations but agreed with DM to put these issues aside and move forward in partnership with PUFC. DM then reiterated his forward approach and restated that the past was history and he was only interested in the future. He said that he would always support his employees (of whom BF was one) and as far as he was concerned the past was behind us and we should all draw a line and move forward together.

It was agreed that PUFC would consider the proposed projects and, when appointed, the new community director would make contact with the Trust to discuss how we could work with the club. Finally Darragh agreed that the Trust could use its old position in the family stand concourse to conduct its affairs and meet members if we wished to do so.

The Trust Board left the meeting encouraged by the passion and vision of the new Chairman and future owner of PUFC, but shaken by the way in which our genuine attempts to help the club had been devalued by BF's attack. We now look forward to PUFC's making contact with the Trust, so that we can begin providing practical help to the club.

If you have any comments, views or suggestions relating to these minutes or to the content of our proposals to the new chairman, Darragh MacAnthony. Or if you feel you are able to offer any help with our proposals for PUFC, then please write to us at our Freepost address or send us an e-mail to :-

**THE POSH SUPPORTERS' TRUST,
FREEPOST NAT22867,
P O BOX 587,
PETERBOROUGH PE4 5BR.**

theposhtrust@yahoo.co.uk

Proposal To Darragh Macanthyony

"We want Peterborough United Football Club to be a focal point of the local community. Of course we want success on the football side but we also want local people to feel a proper attachment to the club not just to the players. I want this to be a blueprint for how clubs can work with the

supporters, local people and local businesses to produce a club that everyone is proud of.”

Darragh MacAnthony, October 2006.

This is also a core belief of The Posh Supporters' Trust and is why we wholeheartedly support Darragh in his aims and plans.

We believe that the club is more likely to be successful with the fans' becoming involved, adopting the aims, understanding the plans and as a result feeling part of the club.

We believe that we have the knowledge and experience to be able to help the club in the new era. Some of the ideas we are willing to put into practice ourselves, some with the help of the club and others we recommend, because we think they will help the club be run more effectively and bring back the fans.

Re-launch Event

We believe this is essential and should be a major evening event.

Compere – (suggestion) Andy Burrows of Radio Cambridgeshire.

Statement/speech from DM including the philosophy and aims of the club.

Contributions from each of the supporters' groups' representatives committing themselves to working with the club and explaining what they will do to help.

Contribution from one of the club executives outlining some of the detailed initial plans.

Question and answer session.

Fans' day

Open day at the club with DM, players, former players, management and fans' groups. Opportunity to buy merchandise and mini season tickets.

Five - a - side for small kids.

Community Director

A newly created role at the club focusing on bringing mutual benefit to the club and the local community from the football activities.

- organise player school trips and other non-commercial appearances.
- work with the PCC and PUHL to use the stadium for community purposes.
- involve the club with important community activities.
- represent, promote and market the club in all areas apart from the corporate sector.
- work with the youth development officer in promoting football in the local community.

This will free up the commercial manager to focus on commercial income including sponsorship and club fundraising events such as the golf days, dinners, auctions etc.

Further ideas for discussion

Fans' survey.

Establish Posh Museum.

Junior Posh.

Share Save Scheme. Modelled on the Glasgow Rangers FC scheme (which is aiming to raise £5.6m) - income for the club and commitment from fans.

Supporters coach scheme to enable more fans to travel in from outlying areas. This is a significant part of the fan base.

Match ticket sales outside Peterborough.

Re - design the half- time draw to create a significant fundraising stream for the club.

Short-term wish list

Re-introduce the "Post Horn Gallop" when the teams run out.

All gatemen and non-steward match day staff to wear "Posh" polo shirts.

Improve and extend pre-match music.

Improve the drearily formulaic matchday programme.

Mini season tickets for the rest of the season to attract lapsed and new fans.
Address issue of poor toilets.
Read out half time scores slowly!

Long-term wish list

Major campaign to attract fans from new residents of Peterborough, especially young people.
Much greater commercial use of Family Stand concourse.
Bring contracted-out services back in-house when and where possible.
200 club – new scheme to utilise the Noel Cantwell Suite.
Re-invigorate the match day experience.
Local pub and clubs darts competition with finals on Family Stand concourse.
Sponsored (e.g. by Co –op) school football tournament with final at London Rd.
Study and where appropriate adopt community interaction template from Telford FC.

MOY'S END: LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

Although it may seem that nothing has happened since PUHL lodged its outline planning application for the building of a 2,000-seater stand and 135 flats on the site of the Moy's End terrace and car park, there has been a great deal of activity behind the scenes. The Trust Board has been monitoring this activity throughout the last year and made its own submission last summer.

Consideration of the PUHL application by the City Council Planning Committee has been postponed for the umpteenth time and is now possibly scheduled for Tuesday, 3 April. If the meeting goes ahead, the Trust will be there to monitor events and make a verbal representation on behalf of fans.

This will give us an opportunity to reiterate our support for the building of the stand. In the light of Darragh Macanthy's proposed take-over, we believe that PUHL could easily be tempted to delay its construction. In order to build the flats they would have to demolish the existing terrace, leaving London Road as an ugly, three-sided ground for the foreseeable future. With the best will in the world, a new stadium would take a minimum of five years to complete.

Therefore, we favour the building of the new stand, provided the developers agree to the points made in our submission concerning parking facilities for disabled and elderly fans, community facilities at the ground and financial assistance for the club's youth system.

We reproduce below our submission to the planning committee in respect of the revised application submitted by PUHL at the end of 2006. We have also submitted a 576-signature fans' petition, collected on just a handful of days last summer, supporting our submission.

PLANNING APPLICATION REF: 06/01868/OUT. DEMOLITION OF FOOTBALL STAND, ERECTION OF NEW STAND AND RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AT PETERBOROUGH UNITED FC

PLANNING SUBMISSION

Introduction

The Trust is generally in favour of the building of a new stand and flats at Moy's End, but strongly recommends that Peterborough City Council require Peterborough United Holdings Limited (PUHL) to

- (1) augment the funding of the youth football "Centre of Excellence",*
- (2) safeguard parking facilities for elderly and disabled football supporters and*
- (3) make available a range of facilities for the local community at the football stadium.*

The Posh Supporters' Trust

The Posh Supporters' Trust was established in 2002 by long-standing Posh supporters to strengthen the bonds between Peterborough United FC and the community that it serves. It also aims to benefit present and future members of the community by promoting and encouraging the game of football as a recreational facility, sporting activity and focus for community involvement. The Trust campaigns for supporters' and community interests to be given a higher priority at the club.

The Trust receives help and advice from Supporters Direct, a government-backed national body that has assisted over 140 supporters' trusts to become active in their communities. Over a dozen football clubs are owned or controlled by trusts. Many more have been saved from oblivion in campaigns orchestrated by supporters' trusts.

Most Football League clubs have supporters' trusts with similar aims.

Peterborough United Football Club

We consider that a thriving football league club is central to the development of a city that aspires to be a regional hub. Although the population has more than doubled in the last 30 years, average home attendances have diminished by over 40 per cent. We wish to see this trend reversed.

Youth Football – Centre of Excellence

For many years Peterborough United had a very successful youth system (the Academy) that competed, in ability but not financially, on equal terms with Premier League clubs. The scheme was abruptly cancelled in 2003 when the club changed hands and immediately many promising young players were lost to youth systems operated by rival clubs in the area. Since then a new system has been established, thanks to the City Council. The project is viable and funding stretches as far as the end of 2008.

SUBMISSION 1: We propose that the community, and indirectly the club, should benefit from some of the profits derived by PUHL from the residential development by means of a Section 106 grant to be injected into the youth system. A substantial payment would help to guarantee the survival of the scheme until 2010, 2011 or further.

There is a clear need. Virtually all Football League clubs have an established youth system – Peterborough United should be no exception. A successful Centre of Excellence, providing a stream of young players from under-9s to under-18s and into the reserves and first team, would be a boost to the club and the

sporting life of the city. The eventual sale of the better players taken from the Centre could also provide a source of future income for the club as it has in the past.

The scheme is sustainable and affordable. With a contribution from the property development the Centre of Excellence would be sustainable into the medium and long term and also affordable. It is likely that matched funding would be available. To be successful, the scheme needs to be certain of its future, so that children now under 10 years old can aspire to graduating all the way through the system to the first team.

We believe that the Centre of Excellence should either be administered as a separate trust or that any payments should be ring-fenced to safeguard the scheme from any financial rigours experienced by the football club itself.

Parking

The principal reason given by PUHL for the new stand is the need for the football club to be ready to stage Championship-level football in a few years' time. However, the Transport Assessment submitted in support of the proposal plays down the loss of "some 110" parking spaces, suggesting that only 100-115 of the existing 160 parking spaces are used on match days. True, if Darlington or Torquay United are the visitors for a League 2 match, but not if the opposition is a local rival club such as Lincoln City or Northampton Town.

The Transport Assessment states that "the number of supporters attending future matches will remain similar to current attendance levels". Again, it is difficult to reconcile this with the suggestion that a new stand is necessary in order that the club can compete in the Championship against clubs with substantial away support like Wolverhampton Wanderers, Sheffield Wednesday and Norwich City.

We foresee serious problems with parking, which could adversely affect attendances at home matches. As many of those who use the Moy's End car park are elderly or infirm, most of the alternative facilities referred to in the Transport Assessment would be unsuitable for them on the grounds of distance from the stadium. In addition, some of the city centre car parks are likely to be built over in the next few years, according to the City Centre Master Plan issued in November 2003.

Disabled parking

Although the new stand provides places for twenty disabled spectators, the only parking provision is "*four non-allocated spaces to be given over for sole use of the football club on match days*". We regard these facilities as totally insufficient.

When the Glebe Road stand was proposed a few years ago, Barry Bennett, a director of The Posh Supporters' Trust, was a member of a consultation group organised by the City Council to discuss disabled facilities. The plan was approved, but subject to a minimum of 20 disabled parking spaces being provided for the use of disabled supporters on match days. We are certain that this facility was meant to be provided in perpetuity.

SUBMISSION 2: We submit that the plans should allow for the provision of substantially more parking spaces – especially those designated for disabled motorists – for use by football supporters, or alternatively permanent arrangements enabling supporters with mobility issues to gain access to the stadium to attend matches.

Stadium use for community purposes

We believe that further improvements to the stadium, which would benefit the local community, should be a requirement of any planning approval. This should involve *the use of the stadium for sporting, educational and other purposes particularly on weekdays*, the details to be agreed between the City Council,

Peterborough United Holdings Limited and Peterborough United Football Club. We recommend that local residents should seek advice from the Federation of Stadium Communities, which specialises in improving the quality of life in stadium neighbourhoods; it explores ways in which football clubs and community groups can work together to bring mutual benefits to the local area.

SUBMISSION 3: We consider that a Section 106 payment should be made by PUHL towards the cost of providing facilities at the club for local residents or for community services that would benefit from the use of such facilities.

Completion of project

It is common knowledge that the presumptive owner of Peterborough United, Mr Darragh Macanthy, intends to build a new football stadium elsewhere, in or close to the city. We believe that, if planning permission were granted to PUHL, there could be a temptation to demolish the existing Moy's End terrace, commence construction of the flats, but then delay work on the new stand. As a new stadium would almost certainly take at least five years to come to fruition (with no guarantee that it will be built), such a scenario could condemn the football club to having an ugly, three-sided ground with reduced capacity and poorer crowd atmosphere for the foreseeable future.

SUBMISSION 4: We submit that, if planning permission were granted, the only way to respond to these uncertainties at present would be to require PUHL to make the new stand available for use prior to the first occupation of the residential development.

Planning Obligations

We understand that the City Council's interim Planning Obligations Strategy would normally require a contribution of up to £18,000 per dwelling towards infrastructure and other facilities in Peterborough. Any such agreement with PUHL in relation to the present application would understandably need to reflect the cost of the Stand. If the developer is released from some of the normal contributions in order to reflect the stand costs, then we still consider that the £1,500 charge per dwelling for community purposes should apply. We believe that this would produce sufficient funding to enact Submissions 2 and 3 with additional contribution still available for Submission 1. We have some knowledge of the costs of youth systems from other football clubs and would be happy to discuss this and believe that grants may also be available.

SUBMISSION 5: Bearing in mind the City Council's Local Plan policy IMP1, relating to the securing of satisfactory development, and the fact that a specific number of dwellings is not a binding part of the outline application, we request that the City Council seek a per-dwelling based contribution to deliver the community obligations requested above.

We would be happy to provide further information on any of these submissions.

Yours sincerely
Peter Williams, Secretary
For and on behalf of the Board of The Posh Supporters Limited

THE TRUST'S VIEW ON CLUB OWNERSHIP AND THE MOY'S END

Soon after Darragh Macanthy came to Peterborough and announced that he wanted to take over Peterborough United, Barry Fry admitted that he could

only sell with the permission of Peterborough United Holdings Limited and that permission had not been granted.

For the sake of the football club and its long term future we strongly urge PUHL to agree to the sale of the club to Darragh Macanthy immediately. We note that the fans were never made aware that the sale of the club could be prevented in this way.

Although we understood from previous statements that the new stand would not cost the football club a single penny, it would appear that PUFC will have to pay just over £1m for fittings. The latest information made available by PUHL to the council planning officer is that the cost to PUHL of the new stand, as advertised to the fans and general public, will be £2.5m, but that the cost of fitting out the stand, amounting to just over £1m, and included in that figure, is scheduled to be borne by the football club.

TRUST MATTERS

‘NEW’ ADDRESS FOR TRUST WEBSITE

We apologise for the recent breakdown in the Trust’s website, caused by problems with our domain name. However, the site is now up and running again, but with a new address:

www.theposhtrust.co.uk

The more observant of our members may notice that this was our original website address when the Trust was established four years ago.

TRUST BOARD CONSIDERS BUS SERVICE

The Board of The Posh Supporters’ Trust is considering whether it would be feasible to organise a bus service to Peterborough United home matches from a number of outlying towns and villages. If you have any thoughts about this idea or would be interested in utilising such a service, please make contact with us, either by mail or email.

VACANCIES ON TRUST BOARD

If you believe in what the Trust is doing on behalf of Posh fans and would like to become involved in our activities, please make contact with us. There are vacancies on the Trust Board, including that of the Secretary. Our Board meetings take place every three weeks or so. In addition we are in regular contact with Supporters Direct and other trusts around the country.

PROXY VOTES

We would like to thank all those members who, being unable to attend the club's AGM on 13 December, offered their proxy voting rights to the Trust's board members. As a result eight Trust directors attended the meeting.

JOIN OUR GOLD BOND SUPER DRAW

The Gold Bond Draw is a vital part of the Trust's fund-raising effort. You can help the Trust build its funds by playing Gold Bond every week.

Guaranteed prizes of: £2,000 every week, £5,000 every month, £10,000 every six months and 400 cash prizes weekly.

Hundreds of Posh fans play the Gold Bond Super Draw every week. You pay only £1 a week to buy seven numbers. Full details are available on our website. Gold Bond is an established lottery operating for the benefit of football clubs and supporters' trusts. By buying tickets you help The Posh Supporters' Trust to build its funds. Full details of winners are published every week on our website.

PLEASE HELP THE TRUST...

- ❖ Become a member – **subscription** terms on the back pages.
- ❖ Make a **donation** to the Trust.
- ❖ Play the **Gold Bond Super Draw** lottery every week.
- ❖ **Use your membership card** at the local businesses that provide excellent discounts to members (listed in this newsletter).
- ❖ Shop at Westgate Department Stores, AHF Home Furnishing Superstores and Westgate Optical, asking for the dividend to be credited to the Trust's **share number 473432**.
- ❖ Buy our Posh programmes, books, magazines, Trust baseball caps and legend sets.
- ❖ Offer your services to the Trust, if you have any professional or other skills, e g in fund-raising, accountancy, business management, the law etc.
- ❖ **Make use of our on-line shopping facility, buy.at/theposhtrust.**

We thank all those who continue to support the Trust, however they do it.

QUESTIONS ASKED AT POSH AGM

At the Peterborough United Annual General Meeting on 13 December the Board asked two questions:

Q1. The directors' report and financial statement states that the ultimate controlling party is Barry Fry. If this is so, why can't he sell the club to Darragh Macanthy?

A1. Darragh Macanthy referred the question to the club's former vice-chairman, Keith Cousins. He responded by advising that the reason was a clause in the Memorandum and

Articles of Association that he could not sell the “B” shares in PUHL without the consent of the “A” shareholders. Darragh Macanthy thanked Peter Lloyd for his previous communications on this subject, adding that he had spent about £12,000 in legal fees investigating the possibilities without reaching a satisfactory answer. [In our opinion, the fact that Barry Fry has not been allowed to sell the club proves that the story everyone was consistently given, viz that the club and the property were completely separate in terms of ownership and control, has been shown to be wrong.]

Q2. Is planning permission still an obstacle to DM's take-over of the club?

A2. DM was of the opinion that PUHL would obtain planning permission.

Accounting questions

Prior to the AGM the Trust had written to the club to ask a number of technical questions about the financial statement. We received answers a few days before the meeting:

Q1. Has the club mortgaged any future income from season ticket or other sales to raise money?

A1. No.

Q2. Could you please explain why the amount in respect of “other debtors” has fallen from £584,991 in 2005 to £184,272 in 2006? (We asked for an explanation of the £584,991 last year, but no reply was received.) How much of the £184,272 is payable within twelve months?

Q2. All the other debtors are payable within twelve months. The reason for the large reduction from the previous year was due to the 2005 figures including a sell-on in respect of Simon Davies that was paid after the year-end.

Q3. Would transfer fees received be included in the turnover total or expressed separately? What was the income from transfer fees in 2005/06?

Q3. Transfer fees are included in turnover. The figure included in the 2006 accounts is £215,000.

Q4. What do the auditors mean by “the events in relation to the year ended 31 May 2006 which occurred before the date of approval of the financial statements by the Board of Directors” (page 7, paragraph 1.1)?

Q4. This is a standard audit statement and is merely stating that anything that happened after the year-end but relating to the financial year has been included in the accounts.

Q5. Why was the value of the playing squad (£1.215m in 2004/05) shown as zero in the year ending 31 May 2006?

A5. You may remember that the valuation of the playing squad was first brought into the accounts on the advice of the previous auditors and prior to Barry Fry's ownership of the club. We have never been entirely happy with this situation and after discussions with Stephenson Smart it was agreed to discontinue this accountancy practice in order for the balance sheet to show a truer and fairer view.

FEATURES

WHAT'S THE POINT OF A "SLOW BURN TRUST"?

Over the years supporters' trusts at a number of clubs have been described as "slow-burn" trusts – organisations building slowly because there is neither an immediate crisis nor much hope of gaining a controlling stake in the club. The trust potters along with a community initiative here, a joint project there, with the odd protest thrown in occasionally for good measure.

A good example has been Leyton Orient, where the shareholding acquired by the Leyton Orient Fans' Trust is negligible in comparison with Barry Hearn's unassailable controlling stake. LOFT has voted twice against Mr Hearn at AGMs and EGMs, but they have been token gestures. We have to accept that this could be the fate of The Posh Supporters' Trust if the Darragh Macanthy take-over goes through – but don't forget, it hasn't yet.

So what is the point of these "power-free" trusts? What can they achieve? In addition to "soft" initiatives like assisting with the club's community open days and the Kick it Out racism awareness campaign, LOFT has been active in "hard" issues like the redevelopment of Brisbane Road stadium. When the club's amended plans for a new North Stand – complete with even more flats than originally proposed – were rejected by Waltham Forest Council, and vague hints were dropped that the club might have to leave the borough, LOFT was there to ask the sober questions and try to gain a proper perspective on the issue. In other words, LOFT was using its expertise and its mandate as a democratic fans' organisation to act as a watchdog for the local community and the fanbase.

In a similar vein The Posh Supporters' Trust has been monitoring the proposed Moy's End development for twelve months or so. That has required many visits to the planning offices, meetings with planning officers, correspondence with our lawyers and discussions with property experts. In addition a trust should have a shareholding that enables it to attend the club's annual general meeting and ask searching questions about the accounts, commercial activities and other matters. All these types of activity are reported elsewhere in this issue.

We are sure that there will always be a need for supporters' trusts, *including* those related to clubs that are dependent on the continuing interest and financial input of a wealthy owner.

IF ONLY IT WERE THAT EASY...

Did you see the letter in the *Evening Telegraph* of 29 January from a Mr Brian Goulding? He criticized the “moaning supporters” who, he wrote, had had ample opportunity over several years to organize themselves into a limited company, with a minimum shareholding of £50 each (to make it affordable) and buy out Barry Fry, who “only wished to redeem his investment”. It all sounds so simple, doesn’t it? If it had been that easy, The Posh Supporters’ Trust would have done it long ago. The Trust was set up in 2002 to do precisely that as a last resort if the club would not otherwise survive, or if the owner wished to sell to the supporters. (The club was never formally put up for sale and there was only ever an advertisement for a new chairman who had to be willing to put money into the club.)

In any event, the mathematics are not that simple. Before Darragh Macanthy appeared on the scene Mr Fry was demanding a payment of £1.5m. Even if he were bought out, a glance at the club’s financial statement reveals that the club owed over £2.5m to its creditors (including almost £1m to Messrs Fry and Hand) on 31 May 2006. Oh yes, and what would the club require to give it proper financial stability and keep it trading for the next six months (during which it has been losing about £11,500 a week)? – at least £1m, in round figures.

To summarise, one would have needed getting on for £4m to put the club onto a sound financial footing before the recent influx of players. Now work out the arithmetic.

After so many miserable, unsuccessful years there are now only around 4,000 active Posh fans, of whom, say, 1,000 (conservatively) are children or young adults. That leaves 3,000 fans to pay £4m, i.e. about £1,350 each. I suggest that most people do not have £50 available for Mr Goulding’s “minimum shareholding”, let alone £1,350 to “invest” in a football club whose total assets amounted to £390,000 at the last count. So, if most couldn’t or wouldn’t pay £1,350, a very large number of more affluent fans would have to make up the difference – it would require a few “big hitters” to inject six-figure sums each. Even if enough of these individuals were found, they would expect more for their money than just a share certificate.

Just one more thought for Mr Goulding. One man, by the name of Darragh Macanthy, did come up with the cash to buy out Mr Fry. What happened? Mr Fry was not even allowed to sell the club to him as amazingly, the sale was made contingent on planning permission being granted on the Moy’s End development. There is no guarantee that this will ever happen. Sorry, Mr Goulding, life is never quite as simple as you might imagine.

DISCOUNTS FOR TRUST MEMBERS

All members of The Posh Supporters' Trust have a membership card that entitles them (on production of the card) to benefits generously provided by a number of businesses in and around Peterborough. The membership card is kindly sponsored by Charters.

Please patronise all the businesses that provide these discounts, because they help the Trust to maintain and build its membership base. The Trust thanks all these companies for their support.

If you own or are involved with a business that would benefit from joining our discount scheme, please contact us at The Posh Supporters' Trust, P O Box 587, Peterborough PE4 5XL.

BUSINESS	DISCOUNTS
AJ's Pet Supplies, The Showroom, Whittlesey Road, Stanground, Peterborough	Discounts available according to product.
Arriva Willhire Centres (01733 340493)	10% off the standard published vehicle hire rates on all vehicles. Discount available through all depots, but must be arranged through the Peterborough depot.
Best Bodies, Gymnasium, Mallard Road, Bretton, Peterborough	Fully inclusive, corporate membership for £3.85 a week, paid monthly.
Blinds Direct (tel 0800 0282942)	10% off purchases.
Charters Bar, Town Bridge, Peterborough PE1 1DG	30p off a pint of Oakham Ales, promotional ales and standard lager on home match days only (two hours pre- and post-match). Priority entry to Charters on match days only. Free entry to Charters and the Brewery Tap on entertainment nights for cardholders (conditions may apply).
City Electrical Factors	Discounts available according to type of product.
Ed's Trade & Business Warehouse, Eastern Industry Estate, Padholme Road East, Peterborough PE1 5XL (tel 355320)	Free entry on production of Trust membership card.
Escape Health & Beauty 27 Winslow Road, Peterborough	10% off beauty treatment.
F Wade & Son Fishing Tackle 247 High Street, Fletton	10% off purchases, excluding bait.
Fitzjohn Ingle Estate Agents, 4 Fortune Buildings, Cowgate, Peterborough	20% off standard sole agency fee (with minimum charge of £1,000).
Flag Fen, Britain's Bronze Age Centre, The Droveaway, Northey Road, Peterborough	20% discount on normal day admissions (excluding special events)
Fleur Florists, 31 Queensgate Centre, Peterborough	10% off purchases (excluding Interflora).
Freemans Cash and Carry, Ivatt Way, Peterborough	The name has changed from Freemans Privileged Members' Club to Catalogue Wholesale Direct. It is no longer necessary to purchase a membership card. Members can now visit free of charge, bringing up to three guests and your children.

Gallery Worktops Limited – specialists in granite, marble Corian and Marlan solid surface kitchen worktops. Tel: 07900 557001	10% off trade price list. James Teggerdine (Installation service available)
Golden Cod Fish Bar, Crawthorne Road, Peterborough	10% off purchases.
Golden Cod Fish Bar, Staniland Way, Werrington P'Boro	10% off purchases.
Huntingdon Steeplechases The Racecourse, Brampton, Huntingdon	£3 off admission to The Paddock Enclosure for all weekday meetings (excluding Bank Holiday Mondays).
J W D'Arcy Limited, Jewellers, 7 Westgate, Peterborough	10% discount off purchases (new sales only, not repairs)
Lambe's Lawnmowers, 1440 Lincoln Road, Werrington, Peterborough (tel 01733 321940)	10% off spares and service. Possible discount off new products.
Living Well Premier Health Club, Papyrus Road, Werrington, Peterborough (tel 01733 292600)	One day free trial and reductions on Health Club membership.
Maidenhead Aquatics Peterborough, Wyevale Garden Centre, Postland Road, Crowland, Peterborough PE6 0ED (01733 211825)	10% on all undiscounted items in the shop.
Market Cobbler, Peterborough Outdoor Market	10% off shoe repairs and keycutting, including specialised car ignition keys.
Michael John, Hair Stylists, 30 Queensgate, Peterborough	10% off hair styling.
Michael John, Hair Stylists, 289 Lincoln Road, Millfield, P'Boro	10% off hair styling.
PAGE Group (Peterborough) Limited Unit 2, The Breydon Centre Padholme Road East Peterborough	15% discount on supplying and fitting (and supplying only): replacement sealed units / single glazing; replacement aluminium windows; solar control film; shopfronts and all door furniture; mirrors; and cut glass over the counter.
Penco Fine Art & Graphics, 65 Queensgate Centre, Peterborough	10% off purchases (cash sales only).
PD Kitchens & Bedrooms – made to order units (tel 01733 762039)	10% off trade price list for kitchen and bedroom cabinets
Papa Luigi Dial a Pizza, of 957 Lincoln Road, Walton, Peterborough (tel 777111)	Free french fries or garlic bread with any main meal purchase.
Peterborough Bowl, Sturrock Way, Bretton, Peterborough	20% discount on normal bowling rates and a 10% discount on food deals.
Peterborough Greyhound Stadium	Two entries for the price of one on any Tuesday or Wednesday evening.
Plough Inn, Ramsey Road, Farcet Fen (tel 01733 844307)	10% off meals.
RAC (Telephone 0800 716 976 and quote DT0120).	20% discount on Roadside, Recovery, At Home, Onward Travel and all Standard service levels except RAC Solutions. <i>The offer, which includes free Joint Membership (worth £22) for another member of the household, is unfortunately not available to existing RAC members and applies only to certain payment methods. Terms and conditions apply.</i>

	<i>Calls may be monitored and recorded.</i>
Speedy Hire Centres (Southern) Limited, 577 Lincoln Road, Peterborough	25% off equipment hire.
Terry Wright Cycles, 102 Bridge Street Deeping St James, Peterborough PE6 8EH	12 ½ % off bicycles or accessories.
Thorney Golf Club Thorney Peterborough	25% off green fees on the Lakes and Fen courses.
Woodston MoT Centre, Wharf Road Industrial Estate, Woodston (tel 01733 315268)	£5 off any MoT test.

NEWS FROM OTHER TRUSTS

Notts County Supporters' Trust majority shareholding completed

Notts County Supporters' Trust has announced the completion of the final legal stages of gaining a majority shareholding in Notts County Football Club. This follows the acquisition of the shares of Haydn Green, and makes the trust, and ultimately Notts County supporters, the proud owners of 60% of the shares within the club.

"This is an historic and proud moment for Magpies' supporters who, less than three years ago, were fearful of having a Club to support at all," commented Trust chairman Keri Usherwood. "That the club has come so far in such a short time is testament to the determination and passion of this very special set of supporters. They have willingly contributed their time, effort and money to ensure that Notts County did not die and continues with its loyal fans at its very heart. The acquisition brings with it many new challenges. We need to face this with the same determination, fight and ambition supporters have shown over the last few years."

The majority shareholding allows the Trust and its members to provide strategic influence over the affairs of the club, protect it from the excesses of the past and pursue transparency in the way it is run. On a day-to-day basis the club will be run by chairman Jeff Moore and the board of directors, including elected Trust Supporter-Director Eric Kerry.

As majority shareholders, the Trust will work with the directors to continue rebuilding the club following the disastrous period in administration. Central to this aim will be the creation of an ambitious, thriving, united and successful club that lives within its means.

"It's vital to maximise our income streams "off the pitch", for example through commercial activities and further use of the club's impressive range of facilities", added Keri. The trust is keen to explore investment opportunities and further potential sources of income. Other strategic priorities will be working with the local community to build on the bedrock of the Club's fan base and strong and effective communication with supporters.

In Brief

Unibond Premier pacesetters **AFC Telford United** have reported a profit for the second successive year. In the year ending 31 May 2006 the supporters' trust-owned club made a profit of £195, compared with £5,832 in its first year.

Since being taken over by its supporters' trust, Nationwide South club **Cambridge City** has been breaking even. Tight control of expenditure and new opportunities for sponsorship have enabled the club to balance its books. However, the future is still in the balance, because the lease on the ground runs out at the end of the season. Options include ground-sharing with Cambridge United or even dropping to a lower level in the non-league pyramid.

City are to fight a lawsuit brought by their landlords relating to a dispute over the true value of the ground, bought in 2005 by Red River, who state that they received only £2.2m. City claim that the ground was worth £12m and insist they are entitled to the £10m shortfall.

Only a season after taking over **Rushden & Diamonds** from Max Griggs, the supporters' trust has ceded control of the club to Keith Cousins, who was previously the non-executive vice-chairman at Posh. It is believed that Mr Cousins is backed by Colin Hill, the ultimate owner of Peterborough United Holdings Limited. Although the R & D trust had reduced the operating losses from £1.5m to £0.6m, at a cost of relegation from the Football League to the Conference, it felt that it could not continue its essentially voluntary role without outside investment. The trust retains two positions on the club's executive committee, but not on the board.

The **Chesterfield** Football Supporters' Society has voted to surrender its majority shareholding to support the club's plan to move to a new stadium. In a vote 94.6% of CFSS members backed the plan to attract new investment into the club, which has already applied for a £1.6m Football Foundation grant and agreed a sale price for the Saltergate ground. It is hoped that, after a planning application is granted, building work on the new stadium can start in July 2007, with completion due by July 2008. The club is inviting people to buy preference shares to raise £3.5m towards the project.

UEFA backs study into European Supporters Direct body

Following a recommendation by the Jose Luis Arnaut Independent European Sport Review, UEFA has publicly endorsed the launch of a project to study the feasibility of a European Supporters Direct organization. The project, which will be funded by UEFA, is expected to take a year to complete. The staff will be based out of Supporters Direct's offices in Bloomsbury Square, London.

Phil Tooley steps down

After five and a half years' involvement with Chesterfield Football Supporters' Society, Phil Tooley has decided to step down owing to lack of time. Phil was involved at the birth of the Society and helped it to grow and mature into an organization that saved the life of Chesterfield FC, enabled the club to flourish in League 1 and guided it towards the prospect of a new stadium to be built within the town. As those who attended the launch of The Posh Supporters' Trust in 2003 will recall, Phil is an inspirational and very amusing speaker. He has helped many trusts (and, therefore, clubs) in crisis situations, often in his capacity as a director of Supporters Direct. He will be a huge loss to the supporters' trust movement.

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The Posh Supporters Trust

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM [NEW/RENEWAL]

Surname		Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms
First names		
Address		
Postcode		Home tel. number
E-mail address		

I wish to become a member of The Posh Supporters' Trust in accordance with its Rules. (Members must be 16 years of age or over.)	
Signed	Date

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

12 months	£10	
Five years	£40	
Ten years	£80	
Life membership	£150	
Life membership (over 60s)	£80	
DONATIONS WELCOME		
TOTAL		£

HOW TO PAY

Please send a cheque, payable to The Posh Supporters' Trust, to:
THE POSH SUPPORTERS' TRUST,
FREEPOST NAT22867,
P O BOX 587,
PETERBOROUGH PE4 5BR,
OR help yourself and the Trust by completing the standing order form overleaf.

N.B. Information supplied is held on our database and will not be supplied to a third party without your permission. Ask us for details of the Rules and objects of the Trust by writing to us or visiting our website, www.theposhtrust.com

The Posh Supporters Trust

STANDING ORDER MANDATE

To.....
(Bank or Building Society)

Address.....

Please pay The Co-operative Bank Skelmersdale Branch (sort code 08-92-99)

For the credit of

The Posh Supporters Limited

6	5	1	1	9	7	8	7
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Account number

The sum of first payment

£.....

.....

Amount in words

Commencing date

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DD/MM/YY

**and thereafter annually until you
 receive notice from me/us in writing.**

Name of account to be debited.....

Sort code and account number

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Special instructions.....

Signature(s).....

Note

- The Bank will not undertake to:
- (1) make any reference to VAT or other indeterminate element
 - (2) advise payer's address to beneficiary
 - (3) advise beneficiary of inability to pay
 - (4) request beneficiary's banker to advise beneficiary of receipt.

Date.....

**PLEASE SEND THIS MANDATE AND THE APPLICATION FORM TO:
 THE POSH SUPPORTERS' TRUST,
 FREEPOST NAT22867,
 P O BOX 587,
 PETERBOROUGH
 PE4 5BR.**