

Candidate's statements

The views contained in these statements are the individual views of the candidates and not the views of the Fulham Supporters' Trust'

Ian Clarke

I am putting myself forward for the FST board for the second time, having been an early member of the board in its days as Back to The Cottage. I've been a Hammersmith End season ticket holder for over 35 years and have missed very few away games during that time so feel I have a good understanding of what makes Fulham supporters tick. When the Trust was first established the future of the club at Craven Cottage was endangered. Fortunately, we're now living in better times, but we should always be vigilant; that's why I've remained a member of the Trust since its inception. My day job is all about understanding how businesses work, asking difficult questions when necessary. That's why I'm a big supporter of the structured dialogue between the Club and the supporters via the Trust and why I'd like to see it developed and extended. This is especially important now that we're back in the world of big TV deals and sponsorships; we need to make sure the supporters aren't forgotten. The current Trust board has done an excellent job in recent years and I'm keen to help them amplify our voice as supporters.

Sue Couch

A season ticket holder, I have supported Fulham since 87/88, served on the Supporters Club committee as Press Officer for seven years and was involved in the Fulham 2000 and Back to the Cottage campaigns. Our primary aim then was to keep Fulham FC at Craven Cottage. That achieved, and even with the current good relationship between fans and Club, supporters still need a voice, particularly perhaps in the Premier League where the concerns of ordinary fans risk being lost in the machine of corporate sponsorship. I feel the Trust should represent the generations who have supported Fulham through thick and thin, and who still spend their wages and time demonstrating this commitment. I have a particular interest in encouraging the Club to provide an affordable social space for fans in the new Riverside Stand and would be interested to see how FST members feel about this and whether it is something the Board should get involved in. If elected I would bring to the Board my previous experience in supporters' groups and can offer skills in admin, communications and logistics, not to mention some gender balance which might help female supporters to feel better represented.

Dan Crawford

I was a passionate supporter of the Back to the Cottage movement that secured Fulham's return to Craven Cottage and, over the past few years, have served as a board member of the Fulham Supporters' Trust. I would like to continue in this role because I believe we have made significant progress in representing the fans' views to the Club and building a better relationship between the fans and the Club. I am proud of our work in establishing a regular meeting between both parties and the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding last December.

I have been involved in the supporter's movement since 2001 and have worked for Supporters Direct. I currently serve as a council member on the England and Wales football council and passionately believe in securing greater rights and influence for football fans as well as the concept of supporter ownership. I have a background in research, communications and politics and believe my skills would prove beneficial to the new Trust board in the years ahead.

Chris Gilbertson

The Riverside Stand development one of the key ongoing issues for Fulham supporters. It is of critical importance that the Fulham Supporters Trust maintains its active and reactive stance. As a Chartered Surveyor, I would like the opportunity to continue to use my professional expertise to help the FST make regular and relevant contributions to such an important development for the future of our beloved club.

Along with my professional capacity as a Chartered Surveyor I am a local resident in SW6. I feel passionately that the Fulham Supporters Trust should have a key voice in issues local to Craven Cottage. If I am able to continue on the Board of the FST, I will strongly support the voice of locally resident Fulham fans in the community.

As a member of the Board whose Structured Dialogue with the Club's Executive leadership has been nationally recognised, I strongly support the FST continuing to promote a strong working relationship with Fulham Football Club. I believe it is only through a strong, two-way, relationship that the FST can truly further the voice of FFC fans

TOM GREATREX

I was one of the founders of Back to the Cottage, which later became incorporated as the Fulham Supporters' Trust and having returned to the south of England after living in Scotland for several years, have got back involved in the last couple of years.

I think the voice of Fulham fans is very important, both in good times and bad. As a fanbase, we have had to communicate, persuade and sometimes campaign for the best interests of our Club, and maintaining Fulham in Fulham, back at Craven Cottage. In recent years, the Trust has been able to develop a strong dialogue with the Club while maintaining our independence. We have had some successes – but there is much more to do to be an effective, broad based and representative Trust working in the interests of our members.

I would particularly like the new Board, of which I hope to be a part, bring some new enthusiasm and ideas to help us communicate better to the wider fanbase, help the Club take into account supporter concerns and interests when they make decisions affecting our match going experience, and to celebrate our Club's history, heritage and unique character.

Les O'Gorman

I've been a Fulham supporter since 1960 when my dad brought me to my first game. (Manchester United at home and we lost 0 – 5, so that set the standard for my ambitions supporting Fulham)

During my working career I was a trade union official at a reasonably senior level so I'm used to negotiating with people of influence and reaching agreements on some tricky issues. Part of my duties included the upkeep our branch membership list, also organising mailing lists to contact members by email, normal mail or text messages.

I'm now retired with plenty of time on my hands and although I live some distance from both Craven Cottage and Motspur Park, traveling doesn't bother me as I used to have to do quite a bit of driving around as part of my union duties.

A word about my union connection, I'm telling you about this to show how much I've been involved with computer and negotiating work, but any political views are my own and would have no bearing on anything I may be involved in for FST.

Thank you for your time

Gerry Pimm

Having been co-opted onto the FST Board since February 2017, I have been impressed with the hard work the Trust carries out. We have overseen a lot of improvements and continued dialogue with the Club but we know there is still much to do and I hope to be involved in the continual evolution of the Trust. I bring experience of working in commercial, charity and central banking environments. My specific skills - relevant to what I can bring to the Trust - include governance, strategic planning, business planning and performance expertise. I have been a supporter since the early 1980s and have been involved in many of the campaigns to save the Club/ground. I am passionate that we stay at Craven Cottage, a ground synonymous with the Club and rich in history and heritage. I believe we should continue to keep holding the Club's 'feet to the fire' in a constructive way whilst evolving to meet the needs of Fulham supporters. With three long term Trustee Board members standing down I can offer continuity whilst also guiding new Board members along.

Archie Rhind-Tutt

Once a season ticket holder of 14 years, now a freelance football reporter in their mid-20s working out of Cologne.

Living there and talking to people within the game for the past three years has given me a great insight into how well German football stays in touch with their fans. The way they deal with issues such as ticket prices, your average fan's experience and maintaining club's traditions is something that I can bring to the table.

What's also important to me is trying to give more of a voice to the younger generation of fans, particularly having seen so few there at the FST meeting before Wembley.

I want the best for the club and a strong supporters trust is crucial to Fulham maximising their potential. Ensuring there's more younger people involved in the trust in years to come is something I want to be a part of.

Even if I am abroad for the most part and I am yet to have an involvement in the trust, I think that can help me bring a fresh approach whilst also representing the ever-growing number of fans abroad that we have.

Owen Smith

I've been supporting Fulham since I was a child and once I'd been to the cottage a few times I got the bug. At university, much to the annoyance of my parents, "blew" a first-year student loan payment on my first Fulham season ticket and haven't looked back since.

Following Fulham has been my passion ever since, even when I had a long commute from Cardiff, for home and Away games, but I wouldn't have had it any other way.

I now live in Crystal Palace, still have my season ticket in the Hammersmith end, and would bring to the Trust my optimism, enthusiasm and passion for all things Fulham. I will also be able to leverage skills from my work in business to help the trust to improve three key areas as much as possible – matchday experience and growth of the club on and off the pitch.

I am someone who has built a very strong network of friends through social media, forums and matchdays, all of whom have a diverse and wide-ranging set of views. I am proud to be a Fulham fan and incredibly excited for the upcoming season.