



New unified national supporters' organisation: Premier League network elections

The Football Supporters' Federation and Supporters Direct will be merging into one organisation in the coming months and below is a list of candidates who have put themselves forward for consideration in the Premier League network elections.

Each affiliate member can vote for up to three candidates to represent them on the new national council – over the next ten pages you can find the supporting statements for each of the nine candidates in the Premier League network.

Gron Brookes - Spirit of Shankly:

There is work to be done to keep supporters at the forefront of our game. We are reaching key points in campaigns on Stand Up For Choice, maintenance of the Away Ticket Price Cap, Fan Fare pricing for train travel for supporters and the strengthening of structured dialogue between fans, clubs and football governing bodies. I want to bring the experience I have accumulated at local, regional and national level to work on behalf of supporters to fight for our collective interests. Football Without Fans Is Nothing.

My nomination is backed by the Spirit of Shankly Management Committee to represent our views and interests in the new National Committee and continue our long and established history in national supporter representation.

Spirit of Shankly have been at the forefront of supporter engagement, activism, organisation and representation for the past decade and are recognised as a leading supporter organisation with reach to 150,000 twitter followers. During that time we have delivered victories on ticket price campaigns, securing price freezes after our 77th minute walkout in February 2016 and organised the march on the Premier League offices in June 2013 paving the way for the £30 away ticket price cap.

I have been the secretary of Spirit of Shankly for the past two years, overseeing the governance structure and arrangements including the creation of an Executive Committee as a decision making body.

I have been heavily involved in Spirit of Shankly's campaign on Safe Standing, including the extensive consultation process leading up to our open vote, receiving 27,000 responses, and I participated in our visit to Celtic's safe standing section. I have expertise in the history of Sports Stadium safety legislation. The issues we are faced with in the debate for safe standing are not new, they are themes and attitudes that have been pervasive for decades.

I have extensive structured dialogue experience. Through the meetings with the Premier League I have developed a deep understanding of how they work as an organisation. I sit on Liverpool FC's Stadium supporter forum, dealing with all issues supporters have in relation to Anfield, its expansion and problems that occur in how the Club treats supporters.

The National Council of the new organisation is the best forum to bring my experience to bear to fight for supporters across the Premier League and beyond and it would be an honour to be elected to represent the Premier League network.

Tom Greatrex - Fullham Supporters' Trust:

I am putting my name forward to be a part of the Premier League network group, but also to offer some continuity from the predecessor organisations as the new, unified national supporters group gets up and running. During the course of the discussions ahead of both FSF and SD AGMs in the summer, a strong case was made for the benefits of bringing together the aims, objectives and missions of both into a single organization which could focus on the benefits to supporters of both effective organisation and campaigning capacity on a wide range of issues. Having been closely involved in the development of the options put to the Supporters Direct and FSF memberships, I want to see the decision made by our memberships put into place in the most effective way possible. That means ensuring that those involved in both predecessor organisations are able to be part of the new representative structures, so that a new unified culture can be developed – taking the best from both into one mission, rather than entrenching positions from previous groups.

I believe that the root of many of the problems encountered by fans on a match is in poor governance and a failure to take into account the opinion, perspective and abilities of fans when crucial decisions are made. Providing strong representation and a framework for real and effective structured dialogue between recognised supporter organisations and their clubs is an important element of minimising the risk of the type of crisis situation which has engulfed many clubs over the years. Despite the financial resources available to Clubs playing at the top level in England and Wales, there are Clubs that are poorly run, who operate on a precipice and could very easily find themselves in a crisis situation. While community ownership of clubs at the top level may now seem to be a distant prospect, the ethos of supporter involvement, engagement and dialogue are as relevant in the Premier League as in non-league.

As Chair of the Fulham Trust, with a memorandum of understanding developed with the Club to underpin our structured dialogue, and having been chair of Supporters' Direct and latterly a supporter representative on the FA Council, I am keen to put that relevant experience to good use as we forge a new organisation focused on demonstrating the beneficial value that supporters bring to the way in which football is run.

Tim Hartley – Cardiff City Supporters’ Trust:

I have followed Cardiff City for forty years and helped set up our Supporters’ Trust in 2008. During my eight years as Chair of the trust I established regular meetings with the club’s management to put fans’ concerns over governance and finance as well as ‘bread and butter’ issues to them.

Our most important campaign was to get our club playing in blue after the owner tore up a hundred years of tradition and made us play in red. My wife though says that one of the best thing I did was to get mirrors in the women’s’ toilets in our stadium.

I am Vice Chair of Supporters Direct, a member of the FSF National Council and a member of the interim board of the new fans’ organisation. We know that in the Premier League trusts are unlikely to take over their clubs, but as the money in the game continues to grow we need a strong, responsible voice to stand up and speak for fans.

It was only after pressure from supporters that the government set up a working group to spell out how we should be represented. I gave two pieces of written evidence to the parliamentary inquiry and pushed for fans to have a second member on the FA Council.

As a director of the Welsh Football Trust I have helped increase participation in football, especially among BAME groups. I have also run a number of football projects for disadvantaged children, the local Somali, Bengali and Jewish communities.

I was a journalist with the BBC, was Head of News for the Welsh Government and worked in public affairs. I now write about travel and football and work as a consultant. I am a magistrate, a director of the Co-operative News and am a trustee of the Wales supporters’ charity Gôl! I play 5 a side and the odd game of 11s.

With some 500,000 members between SD and the FSF, working together we have managed to change the way football is run. A single supporters’ organisation gives us the opportunity to continue to speak with a strong and united voice on the issues that matter to fans and I hope to be able to represent all Premier League clubs on the new National Council.

Dave Kelly - The Blue Union:

I have been involved in Fan Activism for more years than I can remember..... I have actively been involved in many local, regional and national campaigns including...

- I was Chair of Everton fan group Keep Everton in our City. We successfully campaigned against our club relocating outside of our City. Our campaign successfully led to a Public Inquiry and we won the day against a Premier League Club, the biggest Retailer in Europe (Tesco) and the local authority.
- I was a founding member of Everton Fan Group “The Blue Union” that was a coalition of four different groups, who came together under one banner
- Founder of Fans Supporting Foodbanks, we have organized Foodbank Collections locally, regionally and Nationally. I actively campaigned on food poverty with Newcastle United Supporters Trust, Huddersfield Town Supporters Trust, Manchester United Supporters Trust along with my own trust and Spirit of Shankly.
- I currently sit on the National Council of the FSF and have successfully been re-elected on a number of occasions.
- I am also chair of the North West division of the FSF.
- I have attended regional and national demonstrations with fans on the Twenties Plenty campaign, with Manchester City fans, Blackpool and Blackburn fans.

In Solidarity,

Dave Kelly

Katrina Law - Tottenham Hotspur Supporters' Trust:

CREDENTIALS

A season ticket holder for 20 years, I joined the Board of the Tottenham Hotspur Supporters' Trust in 2013 because I thought fans deserved a bigger say in how their Club was run and deserved to be part of the conversation about how the game was run. I've subsequently co-chaired one of the busiest and most challenging Trusts in the country for the past 3 years.

I handle the casework at THST, facilitating for fans with suspensions or banning orders, fans with ticketing issues or with stewarding and security grievances. I'm across the main issues at Spurs through regular dialogue with the Club's executive board and through regular home and away match attendance, domestically and in Europe.

NATIONAL WORK

Elected to SD's England and Wales Football Council in 2016, I was the first ever female fan representative on FA Council last year.

I'm involved with the FSF's Kick Off Times Working Group, acting as the main conduit between fan groups and Sky, and with senior politicians over improved rail travel for match going fans.

I was part of the FSF ticketing sub group that secured the £30 Away Price cap in 2016 and regularly lead discussions on key issues around broadcast scheduling and subsidised travel at structured dialogue sessions with senior Premier League executives.

APPROACH

A natural networker, I'm extremely collaborative and collegiate in approach. I am also not afraid to speak up, or to argue for what is right rather than just what is popular, while always remembering elected reps are accountable to those who elect us. I work closely with peers at Arsenal, Chelsea, Manchester United, Liverpool, Everton, Fulham Trusts and with representatives from other divisions, too. I was a founding member of the Olympic Stadium Coalition and was instrumental in uniting fan groups from every London club - except West Ham (sorry WHUISA!) - in calling for a better deal for tax payers, and for football.

I'm professional in how I prepare for meetings and the manner in which I report back, having taken minutes for the FSF and SD on several occasions previously.

I'm confident with the media and have a good relationship with many of the national football journalists along with those local to Spurs and to London.

I'd like the opportunity to continue to consult with and to represent Premier League fans in what I hope will be a progressive, dynamic and relevant organisation.

Steve Moulds, Foxes Trust:

Fans matter, or so we are told by the TV companies and those that run the leagues, and it is important any national supporters' body keeps it that way.

I am keen to ensure that the progress made by Supporters Direct and FSF is maintained and that the dialogue between clubs and fans is improved – along with representing supporters and campaigning on issues that affect all fans.

As a supporter of a Club that has recently experienced life in the top three divisions, I have a broad perspective on the issues facing fans. As a Midlands club, I also hope I could bring to the table some views that differ to those of the north-south powerhouses that feature heavily in the top six spots of the premier league.

I am currently a Board member of the Foxes Trust and for just over two years I have been tasked with keeping up-to-date and reporting on national issues, which has been valuable for gaining experience, knowledge and understanding of the role supporters groups can play at a national level. I have attended all but one of the FSF and SD PL Group meetings and have also represented the Trust at four of the last five meetings with the Premier League. In addition, this year, I have attended the AGMs for both SD and FSF; an All Parliamentary Group session on Safe Standing; and the SD Members Day on the future of football.

I am fortunate that my self-employed status allows me to plan my own time and thus enable me to make most meetings.

My personal and business experience comes from running a small publishing services business for the last 27 years. Prior to that I worked as a teacher, a lecturer and consultant to a government department. I also spent several years as a shop steward and I am therefore well aware of the power of the co-operative movement and collective bargaining.

I cite all of the above by way of demonstrating my commitment to representing the Foxes Trust and would welcome the opportunity to continue this work for all supporters in the new national organisation.

Dave Pennington - Manchester United Supporters' Trust:

I have been an active participant in Premier League networks in both SD and FSF for several years. I have been involved in campaigns for safe standing and for structured dialogue with our clubs. Recently I have led on challenging the FA Cup Wembley pricing and challenging Sky on the supporter impact of their commercially driven second date change for the United/Everton fixture. I am also working with Football Supporters Europe (FSE) on the issue of excessive ticket prices for away supporters in the Champions and Europa Leagues.

As an elected PL Network representative I would consult all supporter groups to determine our priorities, continue to lead or input to key campaigns, and build on my engagement with FSE to develop a UEFA campaign plan on behalf of competing English club supporters. I would also engage with the other league networks to ensure that our priorities and actions align.

I am heavily involved as a Board Member of my own club's Supporters Trust, but my role as a PL Network rep would be to deliver for all clubs. Putting our on-field rivalries aside and working collaboratively and collectively will enable our network and the new national organisation to be most effective lobbying and campaigning with the PL, FA and other regulatory bodies.

I lobbied passionately for a single national supporter body. As a National Council delegate I will work to ensure that the new organisation organises and delivers fully on its integrated mission and grows its influence and delivery across that agenda.

On a personal level, having recently been able to end my full time career early, in part with a view to spending more time on the football supporters agenda, I can offer time, energy and vision alongside my previous track record. It would be a privilege to do this as a PL Network representative.

Steve Powell - Arsenal Independent Supporters' Association:

Organisations:

Founding life member and committee member,

Arsenal Independent Supporters' Association

Founding life member and board member,

Arsenal Supporters' Trust

Life member,

Arsenal Football Supporters' Club

Member,

Arsenal Disabled Supporters' Association

2015-present

Member, Football Supporters' Association/Football Supporters' Federation

1996-present

Member,

Level Playing Field,

2014-present

FSF National Council member

2015-2017, 2018-present

Former director, Supporters Direct

2003-2012

Former Director of Policy, Football Supporters Association/Federation,

2001-2014

Supporter:

Arsenal FC

London Broncos RLFC

Harlequin RUFC

Middlesex CCC

Wales (at everything!)

Second football clubs:

AFC Wimbledon (shareholder and Dons Trust member)

FC United of Manchester (member)

Queen of the South FC

SD Aucas (Ecuador)

CA River Plate (Argentina, member)

C d F Nacional (Uruguay, member)

Currently employed in the National Health Service as a zero hours administrative worker.

I've been a matchgoing Arsenal fan for over fifty years. I also enjoy rugby league (London Broncos season ticket holder), rugby union, cricket, American football, Canadian football, baseball, Gaelic games, Australian rule football and ice hockey. I have extensive knowledge of the game's governance as well as many other sports domestically and internationally. I've worked for and been an activist with the FSF and a director of Supporters Direct.

I have experience of building and running supporters' organisations from the ground up at Arsenal and mentoring/assisting supporters at other clubs.

My background as a trade union official and activist equips me with a detailed knowledge and training in employment, equality and health & safety at work law and best practice which I've been able to use both in my work with the FSF and SD.

As a wheelchair user and regular home and away match-goer I can bring this perspective to the new organisation's deliberations.

Sue Watson - West Ham United Independent Supporters' Association:

I'm standing for a position as one of the Premier League representatives on the National Council as I firmly believe a strong fan voice is a critical aspect of how the overall experience of football can be improved for all. Below is why I believe I would be a good Premier League Representative.

As a tenacious, determined and driven football fan of over 50years, I have a range of experiences I can bring to the role. I've many years of developing structures, procedures and policies within organisations. This includes the Independent Supporters Association (ISA) I'm part of. I have proven track record of successful delivery with the democratic ISA I belong to, as well as my work environment. This includes numerous specific projects and campaigns. I participate in ongoing liaison and work, as part of a forward thinking team, with the football club I support, to address fan questions/concerns and enhance the experience. Through this work the team has been able to bring about positive change for fans.

Campaigns worked on include 'fan on the board of directors' of my club. Here the small working group put together a proposal, agreed a process and shared it with one of the Directors. I see this as a significant way of involving fans in the running of their club whilst helping formulate and agree actions/decisions.

I'm also part of a small fan group working to develop and improve the experience and facilities at the London Stadium. To facilitate wider fan's view, I've drawn up a survey and will provide analysis of outcomes and summary report to inform actions.

I've attended meetings with the club hierarchy to discuss a range of issues and jointly plan ways forward. I've also attended FSF/SD meetings.

I'm looking forward to attending the MPS Independent Advisory meeting, as working to ensure the safety of all fans when attending games is essential. It also allows the fan perspective to be put to those in positions of authority and questions to be asked/answered.

My working with a range of organisations and fellow professionals has given me the skills required to represent Premier League clubs. I have asked those difficult questions, worked with teams on behalf of fans, campaigned on behalf of others and spoken up when needed.

As a representative I'd bring all my skills and experience to the position to ensure effective fan voice and representation at the highest level.
