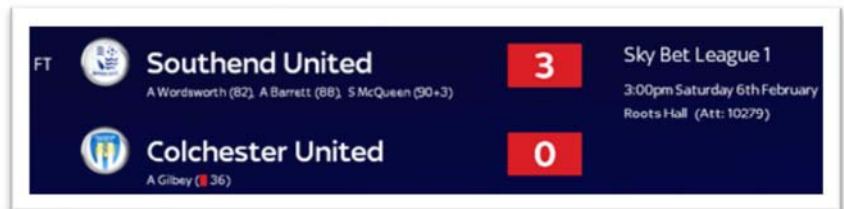




## THE INTRODUCTION – Paul FitzGerald

I started penning this introduction just prior to the Scunthorpe game following a series of results, including one to the right that had left us deliriously happy. Sadly, the result at Glanford Park was not what we were hoping for (nor Valley Parade) and yet after a great result on Monday with the cameras present we are once again dreaming of a play-off place. I think most of us would have been happy to take our current position at the start of the season. I have heard it asked whether going up this season may be unwise. Common sense tells me that financially, things would need to alter, however, common sense and football finances are not often used in the same sentence. As I understand it - those with the purse strings are very keen on the idea of going up...!



Going up = bigger crowds = need for new stadium? Well maybe, but despite British Land's involvement, nothing much has altered from a timing point of view. The December promise of revised plans having come and gone, plus ça change.

On the contrary, however, the new Commercial Director, Danny Macklin does appear to be shaking things up and it appears we can look forward to a plethora of initiatives over the coming months. This can only be a good thing, generally speaking - although I don't doubt some kicking and screaming may occur, and if we just had some positive news on the development, what might that do to the marketing effort?

The government report into Football Supporter Ownership and Engagement was published last month and does make an interesting read for those into that sort of thing. Personally, I don't think the report goes far enough and I doubt it will make any difference to our club in the short term. Nevertheless, your Trust will respond formally after due consideration, some of my early thoughts are summarised further into this newsletter.



How do you spend your Sundays? I'm guessing not doing such mundane tasks as sorting football programmes! As a committee we are a little split on the value of football programmes, we get donated box loads from time to time and we have to store them (they are heavy!), move them (they are heavy) and finally we are collating them (still heavy)! The majority of the committee feel that having a collated list of programmes will add value to the collectors amongst our fans as we will be able to publish a list of the seemingly thousands we now own and that such a list will enable gaps to be filled within collections. The current state is that we have sorted into seasons and are moving on to date order to enable the logging. When complete, the list will be published on our website which we hope will help those interested. Whilst it is not the most exciting challenge for a Sunday morning, it is

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interestingly whilst sorting, to see what has gone before and read (historically) about future plans....did you know for example that 15 years ago we were planning a new stadium?

A recent trip to Ewood Park to watch our youth team in action and a chance encounter with Mike Paterson (one of SUFC's more recent sponsors MSPFX) got me thinking that the Trust has very few corporate relationships. The Trust would be interested in hearing from anyone who'd like to consider a mutually beneficial partnership – all ideas welcome

And finally ...

Trust member, Joseph Rutter (and his friend Alec Grocott also an avid SUFC fan) are heading to Amsterdam in June, actually I am as well but I'm not going by bike....and I'm not raising money for Prostate Cancer! The ride takes place from 3-4th June, the group cycling 145 miles over two days. The first day starts at the Olympic Stadium, they then cycle through the North Essex countryside (including a stop at Colchester's stadium), then, day two is cycling from the Hook of Holland to the Ajax Arena. The duo are representing Southend and there are supporters from clubs all over the country participating (Including once again, Michael Markscheffel), as well as a few football celebs such as Terry Butcher and Viv Anderson. The link to Joseph's JustGiving page is below <https://www.justgiving.com/Joseph-Rutter> .Of course there are so many good causes but this one seems very relevant and we'd love anyone with any spare cash to help Joseph reach his target



**As ever, you can contact me at [pfitz666@aol.com](mailto:pfitz666@aol.com) if you'd like to comment on anything the Trust does or does not do.**

### FOOTBALL SUPPORTER OWNERSHIP & ENGAGEMENT

**We thought some Trust members might be interested in a view of the governments recent report into "Football Supporter Ownership and Engagement" - please note this is a personal view and does not necessarily reflect the views of the committee! However Paul would be very interested in Trust members views on the report and it's findings.**

In January, the government published a report on "Football Supporter Ownership and Engagement" It was compiled by Joanna Manning-Cooper who describes herself as "a long term season-ticket holder at Portsmouth FC - and now a proud Community Shareholder in a community owned club - I saw how private ownership failed us in recent years, and how hard the supporters, led by the Pompey Supporters Trust worked to overcome the many barriers to supporter ownership until they ultimately bought - and saved - the club in 2013"

The purpose of the report is twofold: firstly, on what should be done to remove barriers and create incentives to increase levels of collective supporter ownership; secondly, on what can be done to improve engagement and dialogue between clubs and fans, to improve transparency and trust. Both very worthy intentions - What a shame then, that the clubs engaged on the working group, only included those clubs who had Supporters Trusts who own all, or some of the clubs they support.

This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> such report since 2011, and (excuse my cynicism) but I haven't seen much change in the area of governance generally, in UK football nor specifically, at Southend recently.

Nevertheless, just because something hasn't changed, doesn't mean it's not worth trying! The report does make some interesting recommendations which, with some changes, might be excellent news for the Shrimpers Trust and Southend fans generally.

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The report is 35 pages long.....so summarising it here is a challenge – I'll focus instead on some the key issues and recommendations:

The ownership recommendations focus on three key areas – *"the insolvency process, recognising that historically most opportunities for supporter ownership at the top five levels of the game have emanated from football clubs entering into insolvency; a revised tax structure for supporter owned clubs, and the provision of funding and expertise to supporters during a bidding process."*

The insolvency process is worst case for most supporters - it means the club has failed in its current structure. However, it has given several Supporters Trusts the opportunity to rescue their club. I'm sure we all hope this will never happen at Southend.....by the same token, I remember very well waiting for a call whilst on holiday from Sainsbury's to confirm a tax bill had been paid....how close we may have been to this scenario only Ron Martin knows.....

The recommendations are pretty obvious in the main – i.e., the Administrator must talk to the relevant Trust and in fact, this is now included in Football League rules. The Authorities also plan to make it easier for Trusts to obtain financial assistance and expertise (from an approved list).

An interesting recommendation affecting the Shrimpers Trust is in a *"move to improve the prospects of a successful supporter bid for a club, the Supporter Groups, led by SD with support from FSF and the football authorities should, over time agree a process for formally accrediting supporter representative bodies for the purpose of involvement in football club ownership. This will further ensure that the Supporter Trusts have the necessary expertise and support to develop credible bids for collective share ownership."*

Another key focus for the Group was on taxation status for supporter bids or supporter owned clubs *"and the Group recommends that the government undertakes a comprehensive review of Social Investment Tax Relief (SITR) or other suitable alternatives, to give accredited Supporters Trusts a tax-efficient way of accruing funds to prepare for a future bid"* I struggle badly with this - why should this be limited to supporter bids or supporter owned clubs?

The following statement is the icing on the cake for me: "The Group believes that increased supporter share ownership is a positive way of improving supporter involvement in the governance and running of their football clubs.".....but has no recommendations whatsoever, for achieving that, EXCEPT in the case of insolvency.

"Governance" - I wonder if Joanna knows Tara Brady? Ron's idea of governance, is anyone willing to lend him a fiver!

The report moves on to communication and to be fair to Southend United (ex Ron), that is probably as good at present, as it's ever been. We have an experienced Chief Executive who takes the fans seriously and listens to their concerns and whilst his Fans Forum didn't last the course, the principle was well intended and received.

The report outlines how each league will provide a template for fan engagement – to be fair, I'm not holding my breath for this and in any case, the key issues around our club are more to do with strategy, than day to day running.

The following recommendation is interesting.... *"It (the league) also aims to develop and improve relationships between fans groups and their clubs which may, over time, facilitate new opportunities for fans to invest in their clubs and encourage opportunities for collective share ownership. Building trusted partnerships can be a step towards a sensible, managed exit route by owners who intend to sell, and giving supporters a transparent and visible view of the strategic direction of a club, is a good backdrop for dialogue on potential supporter ownership/ investment opportunities."*

Ron's exit route – should be interesting – I wonder what he thinks now, 15 years after he got chatting to Vic over the garden fence?

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To be fair to our Chairman, with a bit of nagging, he will engage one to one, but this is not ideal. Fans generally want to know what's going on and what the plans are, holding a delayed AGM (ahem) once a year and stating commercial sensitivity (whilst potentially true sometimes) does nothing to satisfy supporters.

If anyone wants to read the entire report in its entirety, it is on the gov.uk website.

The Shrimpers Trust submitted a paper to the original enquiry and I'll leave you with one of the points which is not designed to snipe at Ron, more the situation football has found itself in (in the UK and specifically at Southend):

- A further point of note is that it would seem that the Board at Southend United is largely irrelevant as there is a perception that the owner says and does what he likes. Ron Martin owns a controlling majority of shares and therefore it is materially irrelevant what other directors and the fans think. This autocratic style of management is likely to hamper implementation of any Government co-operative initiative.

I rest my case m'lud

## FUNDRAISING

### 100 Club

The latest winners in the scheme, pulled out of the hat during weekly draws since the last newsletter were **Alan Perry, Bryan Woodford, Chris Karkoski, Wally Despy, Teresa Perry, Graham Hart, Charles Ball, Chris Karkoski, John Freemantle, Bryan Woodford, Paul Manning, John Walton, Mike Smith, Donna Stone and Matt Eva.**

The nature of the 100 Club means the more people that sign up, then the bigger the weekly prize. To register your interest, you can still contact Alan Perry at [alanperry4@hotmail.com](mailto:alanperry4@hotmail.com) or by calling 01702 476458 and put yourself in with a chance of winning the weekly prize.

Remember, the more people that sign up to the scheme, then the higher that prize will be. By setting up a standing order for just £5 a month (or just £60 a year), you put yourself in with a chance of winning around £28.00 per week at the present time.

### Quid-a-Goal

**Our Quid a Goal scheme is now up and running for the 2015/16 Season.**



**The current total after the game vs Burton Albion is £1435.00.**

The aim of the scheme - like most of the Shrimpers Trust's activities is to raise money for Southend United Football Club and make sure that there is a club for us to be supporting in the foreseeable future.

**For the season 2015/16, money raised from this 'Quid a Goal' scheme will be donated to Ricky Duncan's Youth department to help ensure that players of the quality of Daniel Bentley and Jack Payne continue to be nurtured and made available to the first team.**

### This is how it works:

Those who support the scheme with a pledge have their name displayed in the United match program each week and are detailed on this web site.

We ask you to pledge £0.25, £0.50, £1.00 or more under various headings such as clean sheets, various players scoring goals, or team goals. This does not have to cost you a fortune as you can easily judge in advance how much your pledge will cost you come the end of the season.

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For example, the Blues rarely manage more than 70 goals in a season from 1st team matches (14/15 League goals - 54). A £0.25 per goal pledge would therefore most likely not cost you more than £20.00 come the end of the season. If you chose to do £0.50 per point and we finished up with 80 points. At the end of the season we will write to you thanking you for your support of this initiative asking you to send us a cheque for the amount of £40.00.

Last year this scheme raised more than £2,000 from the 40+ people that helped us. This includes support by some of the Southend United's directors.

**If you would like to help raise funds for this worthy cause you can do so by completing the QAG Entry Form which has been included with this newsletter and return to us either by post to the address shown on the form or by handing in at the Trust Info Stand in the Shrimpers Bar prior to any home game.**

Entry forms are also available from the Trust Website [www.shrimperstrust.co.uk](http://www.shrimperstrust.co.uk)

## XMAS DRAW WINNERS

**The Shrimpers Trust 2014 Xmas Draw took place at half-time during the game vs Dagenham & Redbridge on Sunday 28th December.**



The winners are as follows:

	Prize	Ticket Number	Name
1st	<b>£500.00</b>	<b>12861</b>	<b>Grant Davidson</b>
2nd	<b>£250.00</b>	<b>5930</b>	<b>Donna Stone</b>
3rd	<b>£100.00</b>	<b>5652</b>	<b>Phil Cox</b>
4th	<b>Lunch for 2 at Boots &amp; Laces</b>	<b>5621</b>	<b>Paul Hay</b>
5th	<b>Bottle of Champagne</b>	<b>5629</b>	<b>Tom Bleakey</b>

**All the winners have been notified and the Trust would like to thank all those that bought and sold tickets helping us to raise just over £2,500.**

## MEMBERSHIP

### Life Membership (Total 226)



Life Membership of the Trust currently costs £100.00 if you have an email account or £150.00 if you prefer to receive Trust Mailings by post.

If you are interested in joining this group please contact our Membership Secretary, Paul Yeomanson via email at [membership@shrimperstrust.co.uk](mailto:membership@shrimperstrust.co.uk).

You can also join up as a Life Member in the Membership Section of the Trust Website [www.shrimperstrust.co.uk](http://www.shrimperstrust.co.uk), and postal applications will also be accepted at **Shrimpers Trust, PO Box 5830, Southend-on-Sea, SS1 9FD.**

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## Welcome to New Members since the last Newsletter

Patrick & Patricia Abrahams, Eleanor Bale, John Banks, Carol Champion, Mark Corney, Michelle Cousins, Ryan Fleming, Paul Frood, Marc Grayston, Ross Harvey, Matthew Oliver, Mike Paterson, David Ramsey, Graham & Alice Ross, Stuart Rushton, Zinaida Sabic, Richard Sheppard, Richard Telling, Chris Walsh, Rob Warman, George Warren, Lee Warren, Charley Watson, Roger Weaver, Henry Wilson and Mark Wilson.

*\*\*Please note that the Shrimpers Trust would like to know if any of its members' addresses change, or if they have a new email address so that newsletters and other correspondence can be sent to the correct address. Please send any change of address details to **The Shrimpers Trust, PO Box 5830, Southend on Sea, SS1 9FD**, by email to [membership@shrimperstrust.co.uk](mailto:membership@shrimperstrust.co.uk) or alternatively fill in our on-line contact details form which can be found in the Membership Section of the Trust Website, [www.shrimperstrust.co.uk](http://www.shrimperstrust.co.uk) \*\**

## FORTHCOMING FUNDRAISERS

### RACE NIGHT

**Saturday 5th March 2016**  
**Shrimpers Bar, Southend**

**The Trust will be holding a Race Night on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2016 in the Shrimpers Bar, Roots Hall, first Race at 7.30 pm.**



With 8 Horse/Dog Races and novelty race if times allow, this is a great event for all the family, with **Cash Prizes** for each race plus chances to win **Bottles of Wine, Goodie Bags** and loads more including **Meals at the East Chinese Restaurant and the Rendezvous Casino.**



**This year as well as raising funds for the Trust 50% of the Nett Proceeds will be donated to the Alzheimer's Society.**

Admission is by Ticket and will cost just **£3.00** and can be purchased in advance from the Trust Information Stand in the Shrimpers Bar prior to every Home Game or from the Events Section in the Trust's Online Shop.

**For further details or to purchase tickets contact Paul Yeomanson Tel: 01702 302373 or Email: [info@shrimperstrust.co.uk](mailto:info@shrimperstrust.co.uk)**

### CURRY NIGHT

**Monday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2016**  
**The Maharaja, London Road, Benfleet.**

The evening begins at 7.30pm and the cost will be £12.00 per person for an 'all you can eat' buffet.



We welcome Members and Non Members alike so why not come along for some good food and chat.

As a fundraising event for the Trust we will also be holding a Raffle.

**For further details or to book a table contact Alan Perry Tel: 01702 476458 or Email: [alanperry4@hotmail.com](mailto:alanperry4@hotmail.com)**

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## QUIZ NIGHT

**Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2016**  
**The Shrimpers Bar, Roots Hall**



The Shrimpers Trust will be holding their final Quiz Night of the 2015/16 Season in the Shrimpers Bar, Roots Hall on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2016.

The doors open at 7.00pm with commencement of the quiz at **7.30pm sharp**.  
**The cost will be £10.00 for adults and £6.00 for under 16's.**

Included in the price will be a choice from 5 meals (*Chicken & Chips, Chicken Nuggets & Chips, Sausage & Chips, Fish & Chips or Vegetarian Spring Roll & Chips*). The meals are provided by the Fish House and will be served at around 8.45pm.

Ideally we need tables of 8, but if you would be happy to join others who will come in parties of less than 8 please let us know.

**For further details or to book a table contact Alan Perry Tel: 01702 476458 or Email: alanperry4@hotmail.com**

## SHRIMPERS TRUST ON SOCIAL MEDIA



Follow us on twitter @shrimperstrust and like and follow us on Facebook "Shrimpers Trust" to keep up to date with all our latest news (including match reports) and events.

## SHRIMPERS TRUST MERCHANDISE

**With Christmas been and gone its time to get back involved with some retail therapy.**



The new Trust Pen is a great addition to our stock.

With a Blue, Yellow & White body the Plastic Push Button Ballpen has the Trust Logo printed on the main body and has a unique Magnet Clasp printed with a football design.

**This unique pen is exclusive to the Trust and will cost just £3.00.**

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**Or why not splash out on one of the items in our Exclusive Sammy the Shrimp Jewellery as worn by Phil Brown in the Play-off victory over Wycombe.**

Manufactured in Sterling Silver with Blue Spinel the items are available as a Pin or Cufflink Set which come in their own presentation box.

Each of the items are priced as follows:

**Blue Spinel Pin: £45**

**Blue Spinel Cufflinks: £75**

**Plain Pin: £35**

The Pin measures 24.5mm high x 21mm wide and is also available in a plain Silver version and the Cufflinks measure 20mm high by 17mm wide.

**These and other items in our merchandise range can be purchased from the Trust Information Stand in the Shrimpers Bar or alternatively you can purchase any of our online in the Trust Shop at [www.shrimperstrust.co.uk](http://www.shrimperstrust.co.uk)**

Please note that that as well as the usual cash and cheque payments we can now accept Credit/Debit Cards for all purchases including Merchandise & Memberships.



## GOOD LUCK TO LUKE PROSSER



**Whilst Luke is still technically on the books of Southend United, he was loaned to Northampton Town at the end of the last transfer window and looks likely to have played his last game for us.**

Luke first joined the Shrimpers in the 2010-11 season and was in and out of the team due to the fine form of a certain Bilel Mohsni and was consequently loaned to Rushden and Diamonds for three months. He was recalled shortly after due to an injury crisis and helped Blues earn a draw soon after with a last minute equaliser against Port Vale.

In the following two years Luke became more of a regular feature in the first team and was part of the team that narrowly missed out on automatic promotion and ultimately losing to Burton Albion in the playoffs under Paul Sturrock.

Luke also has had two Wembley outings with us, once in the Football league trophy and the other as an unused substitute in last seasons nerve wracking playoff victory against Wycombe Wanderers.

We have written to Luke to express our best wishes to him for the future as we felt he always gave his all on and off the pitch for the football club and indeed the Shrimpers Trust with him attending and participating in several trust ran events.

Hope you will join me in wishing Luke all the best for the future.

24<sup>th</sup> February 2016