

NEWSLETTER – Vol. 17 Iss. 04. – May 2022

THE INTRODUCTION – Paul FitzGerald

Progress but not success ... yet

The end of the season provides us an opportunity to reflect on what The Shrimpers Trust and our football club have, and have not achieved during the year.

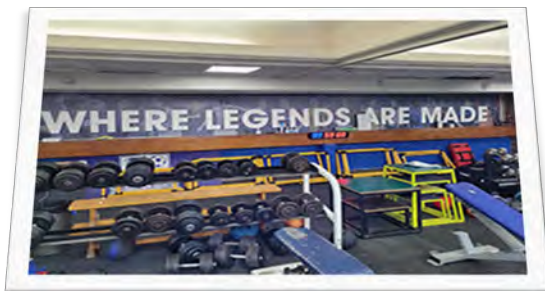
Finishing midtable in the National League given the circumstances definitely feels like progress given where we were at the start of the campaign.

It is to be hoped that Saturday 9th October 2021 proves to be the nadir in the history of Southend United Football Club. A 4-0 home defeat to Chesterfield, interrupted by supporter protests against the running of the club by Chairman Ron Martin (a week after his infamous and ill-fated visit to the away end at Solihull Moors), was followed by the release of Phil Brown from his duties as first-team manager for the second time.

There is absolutely no doubt that the National League is an extremely tough division and the efforts of Kevin Maher, Darren Currie, Mark Bentley and the backroom team since then have been encouraging. This group have the Shrimpers Trust's full support and backing, and for a brief period during a 13-match unbeaten run, it was nice to be able to dream of sneaking into the play-offs, however fanciful that suggestion sounded. Next season the aim must be for those aspirations of promotion to be realistic.



Southend United belongs in the Football League. We are in the National League due to the mismanagement of our football club at the very top. We have our eyes firmly set on the future but we cannot forgive or forget the mistakes that have been made until we see tangible success, and this season's improvements should not be seen as an excuse to settle for complacency in the 2022/23 season.



We have already formed a great relationship with Kevin and his team, and we have provided financial support this year towards the improvements in the club gym.

<https://www.southendunited.co.uk/news/2022/march/gym-undergoes-refurb-thanks-to-trust-donation/?msckid=e2b7f674d14411ecb151ef34b6f593d9>

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The recruitment and identification of targets has been impressive, helped by Darren's connections with Sheffield United and John Still's immense and incomparable lower league knowledge, and there is some real promise in this area. The Shrimpers Trust expects the club to build and support the backroom in the offseason and we will be watching this closely. We have seen far too often our club do business far too late (and often the wrong business) which has left us playing catch up at the start of the season. We don't expect any excuses this offseason and certainly do not want Kevin and the teams' hands being tied like has happened with so many of his predecessors.

The Trust has continued to support the club's Academy, and this year was no different as we were delighted to continue our official sponsorship of the U18s squad. Failure to achieve success next year puts elements of our club at risk, including the youth setup. After year 1 in the National League 50 percent of the funding stops, and after year 2 Ron Martin and the parent companies will need to find a way to finance the entire Academy without financial support from the EFL, or perhaps they could take a decision to shut it down entirely. The Trust see the Academy structure as imperative to the future of the football club (as shown by our continued sponsorships), and thus see the next season as vital in the progression.



The Trust had been consistent in its demand for a new Chief Executive since the departure of Steve Kavanagh and had continually called for this to improve communication between the Football Club and its supporters. We were pleased that the Chairman finally accepted that he needed assistance in the running of the Club and appointed Tom Lawrence last offseason (after a, not so, gentle nudge from Stan Collymore). We have regular dialogue with Tom through various meetings and ongoing communication channels and have a strong working relationship. We will continue to support Tom in trying to make Southend United the best it can be, both on and off the field. There is no doubt that Tom has an incredibly tough job and we hope the impact he can make will only increase as the standards are increased to the necessary level.

What about Ron Martin? This remains a concern of the Shrimpers Trust. Communication levels have reduced in recent months with the Chairman, although that is not unusual for periods over the last 20 years. We continue to regularly ask questions behind the scenes regarding various key aspects such as the development of the new stadium and, of course, the pending HMRC engagement. We continue to be reliant on the funding of Ron and parent companies and see the continuation of pressure and understanding on these elements to be of utmost importance to the stability of our Club.

The Shrimpers Trust have continued to work tirelessly to improve aspects of the Football Club and the community and summarise our achievements for the year as below:

- ✓ Social Inclusion scheme expanded with visits from the Lancaster Lions, Southend Youth Voice, ASD Little Heroes and Vibrance). Special thanks to Karl Lansley for all his work assisting the Trust and to our sponsors.
- ✓ Youth sponsorship continued for the 15th Season.
- ✓ Gym refurbished.

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- ✓ Junior Blues – to say we have been disappointed in the way the Junior Blues has seemingly dropped off the radar with the Club is an understatement. A new database, which took a year to materialise, confirmed our worst fears, with less than 50 members on the annual membership scheme. To that end, the Trust is planning to take back the administration of the scheme ready for the start of the new season, whilst still working alongside the Club to keep our fans of tomorrow engaged and happy in their support of our team.
- ✓ We are now donating money from our ever-expanding Retro shirt sales to the Jeff Astle Foundation, who do so much to help with brain injuries within football.
- ✓ SUEPA – Has grown by 25% in the last year and membership now stands at over 350. We now have over 50% of players still alive as members.
- ✓ 500 Ukrainian refugees helped to a place of safety via our buy a scarf scheme, demonstrating how we've reacted in a unique way, quickly, to a real need for the good of all.



- ✓ Improved working relationships with other formal fan groups.

The supporters are the lifeblood of football and of Southend United. We are encouraged by parliament's progress in the fan led review into the ownership of football clubs and supporters' involvement in decision making. We look forward to seeing more output in this area over the coming weeks.

The Shrimpers Trust try our best to represent the views and interests of all fans, but we accept we will not please everyone. We are an elected group of volunteers who act on your belief on what is best for the Football Club, whilst being accountable to our membership. We are always looking to diversify our board and membership, and should you wish to get more involved please contact our chairman on pfitz666@aol.com. We would love to have you involved!

We wish you all the best for the summer and look forward to seeing you all next season.

Social Inclusion Report for 2021/22

The Shrimpers Trust have run a Social Inclusion Project since 2019. Our aim is simply to bring people together and provide the opportunity to attend Roots Hall for those who, ordinarily, may not be able to do so, for whatever reason.

We try to make the day more than just a football match for our guests, to create a lasting impression. The groups are usually welcomed around midday and given a tour of the stadium, as well as being given the chance to meet the manager and players, depending on timings. There are photo opportunities throughout, and food and soft drinks are provided, along with the match day tickets, either in the stands, or in executive boxes, depending on the cause.

We hope that by offering easy access and an enjoyable environment, that we will make a real difference to a number of lives.

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The season (2021/22) was a tricky one for the football club and, in fact, the atmosphere was so bad for a period, that we suspended our activities. Nevertheless, the groups below, became our guests this season and despite the showing on the pitch, I think we can say that this season's project was successful.

We are still welcoming donations and if you feel you'd like to contribute, you can do so by snapping the QR Code!



Our first guests of the season were the **Badgers Den** group from Rochford, who were with us on October the 9th to watch the game against Chesterfield. The Badgers Den offer bespoke day opportunities for young people & adults with learning disabilities, they specialise in growing independence, teaching life skills, spending time with friends, socialising and accessing the community.

The day was a great success, despite the result!



We took a short break after the Badgers Den visit, because of the toxic atmosphere at Roots Hall, following a series of defeats and fan protests against the owner.



The project restarted in February with guests **Lancaster Lions**. This wonderful group help people with extra needs, to live as normal a life as possible.

Lancaster Lions FC are a disability team for young people and adults in the Southend area. They currently have three teams competing in the Essex Soccability League and play regular fixtures against other disability teams across Essex.

They give players an opportunity to play against players of similar abilities. They also aim to help support individuals with different needs access and play the game.

They aim to play football in a fun, competitive and fair way and welcome anyone interested to join for a session.



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Next up were **Vibrance** (they offer supported living services where people with learning difficulties are supported to learn new skills so they can reach their full potential.)



The group followed the reasonably well trodden path of others, before them. i.e. tour of the ground, meet the players, and watched the game from the comfort of a hospitality box.

A great time was had by all, particular thanks to April Smith and Kevin Maher for making them feel so welcome.



In April our guests were from **Southend Youth Voice** who work to give children, young people, and families a voice. Although based in Children's Services, the team is connected to all parts of Southend-on-Sea City Council, and statutory and voluntary sector organisations in Southend. They want to make sure young people can share their views, be heard, and make a difference in Southend.



They offer several projects for children and young people's voices to be heard on both a local and national level.

Two of their projects are Small Kids, Big Ideas and the Children in Care Council. They are very active groups, and the members work hard to improve the lives of children and young people in the care of Southend-on-Sea City Council. Young people can share their views, experiences, and ideas, whilst having fun too!

Some of the achievements of the group include:

- Made a 'top tips film' for social workers.
- Black Lives Matters project, the young people wanted to educate young people about this very important issue and have purchased a book for all Looked After Children about race, racism and empowerment. This has been delivered to all Looked After Primary and Secondary aged school children.
- Two of the members took part in our interview skills training and were on the young people's interview panel for the Director of Children's Social Work, Early Help and Youth Support.

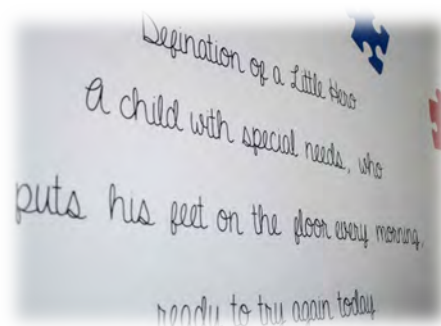
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The group are developing lots more youth voice opportunities for children, young people and families. To find out more or to get involved please email youthvoice@southend.gov.uk

Following the game, I received thanks and a glowing report from them, about their treatment on the day, where a fun time (and a win - not something that's happened too often with our guests) was had by all, so much so, that we have pencilled in a visit for next season.

Our final guests of the season were the **Little Heroes** group, Kim Drake, the co-founder and charity coordinator wrote this for me: -

"Little Heroes ASD Support Group is a grassroots charity that supports in excess of 400 local families of children with autism on a face-to-face basis. We have our own support hub based at 409 London Road, Westcliff where we offer daily support in the form of both child based and adult based activities. In addition, we offer regular wellbeing sessions and social activities to ensure the families can interact with other likewise families - feeling understood and having the opportunities to participate in activities that they may otherwise find challenging. We do our utmost to try and reduce social isolation and remove barriers wherever possible.



Definition of a Little Hero
A child with special needs, who
puts his feet on the floor every morning,
ready to try again today

For more information or to make contact to enquire about support please visit www.littleheroesasd.co.uk or search for Little Heroes ASD Support Group on social media where you can also keep up to date with what is happening."



Following the match, I received this, which I think goes to show that some of our aims were well and truly fulfilled!

"Thank you so much for a truly wonderful day, everyone had a great time and felt really looked after by the girls in the box we had a lovely burger and chips followed by drinks.

My son in particular was still awake at 11pm last night buzzing from the experience as he met his sufc heroes and got lots of signatures.

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Super Steve Arnold, John White and Jason Demetriou were particularly wonderful with our kids and we really appreciated the time they spent with us.

The other two families in our group repeatedly mentioned how much they enjoyed themselves and you've gained a new fan as it was the first football game for one little girl who ended up staying with us after the game to watch the players leave and get her own signatures."

These visits would not be possible if it were not for the work that goes on behind the scenes by Trust volunteers (Karl Lansley in particular) and Club personnel (April Smith in particular), Kevin Maher and several of the players + of course, our sponsors.

I'd like to re-iterate my thanks to the following for their donations, which has helped us get to this point.

- **Karen Dovaston** of Dovaston Law, Specialist Family Law Solicitors
- **Nitin Khandhia** – for and on behalf of BTMK Solicitors
- **Ken Adamson**
- **Stuart Leslie** at Safe Fire Protection
- **Jacqui Dallimore** at the Roslin Beach Hotel



S.J. Adamson Greenhouses & Garden Buildings

Tuesday, 31 August 2021

Greenhouses, Sheds, Lean-to's, Greenhouse Spares and Accessories



Also, thanks to the following individuals for their donations - take a bow all, together we have made a difference.

Philip Hood, Wayne Hickey, Karl Ramsey, David Cousins, Lew Carey, Luke Dennis, Mark Austin, Ewan Brown, Andrew Leeder, David Laurie, Tony Bridge, Stephen Cowdrey, Geoff Creswell, Austin Wilks, Andrew Polkinghorn & Jason Rodwell.

If you would be interested in participating in the scheme or have a recommendation of a worthy cause please contact karllansley@aol.com or jphfitz@gmail.com (or indeed me pfitz666@aol.com)

PLAYER OF THE YEAR AWARDS

The Southend United first-team and under-18 squads joined Shrimpers Trust members at Roots Hall on Thursday evening for the Trust's 2021/22 Player of the Year Awards.

Former Blues forward David Crown hosted the event, with help from Trust Vice-Chair Paul Yeomanson, for the first Player of the Year Awards ceremony to be held for three years following the Covid-19 pandemic.

The big winner was Steve Arnold, who scooped two of the three first-team prizes on offer. The goalkeeper, who has impressed throughout his first season with the club, was voted the Shrimpers Trust Player of the Year, as voted by Trust members, and the Junior Blues Player of the Year, voted by our under-16 members.

Arnold fought off competition from first runner-up Sam Dalby - also in his first term at Roots Hall - and second runner-up Jack Bridge, back in south-east Essex having progressed through the club's Academy, to the main prize, for whom Matt Dennis, Kacper Łopata and Nathan Ralph were also contenders.

The trio were presented with their awards by head coach Kevin Maher, who expressed his thanks to the Shrimpers Trust, and Southend United supporters in general, for their backing since his return to the club alongside Darren Currie and Mark Bentley in the autumn of 2021. The Junior Blues prize was presented by Harley Norton.



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The other first-team award, for the Martin Cranmer Goal of the Season, was won by Dennis for his contribution against Dorking Wanderers in The FA Cup, ahead of another fine finish by the Norwich City loanee, at Weymouth, as well as a brace of Noor Husin strikes (at Dover Athletic and Eastleigh), Tom Clifford's stunner at Maidenhead United and Sam Dalby's goal at home to Wrexham.

The award is named in memory of Martin Cranmer, a lifelong Shrimpers fan and founder member of the Southend United Independent Supporters Club, who passed away at the start of the 2010/11 season at the age of 40. It was presented by Martin's widow, Zoe.

The Youth Team Player of the Year, receiving the Tom Grace Memorial Shield, was central defender Luke Reeve. Reeve finished ahead of fellow second-year scholar Brian Garzon and first-year playmaker Henry Sandat to claim the award, which he collected from Tom's father, Len, and youth team coach Danny Heath.



Tom was an avid Southend United Supporter and a junior member of the Trust who sadly passed away at the age of 15 in July 2007, and the award was named in his memory thereafter. Heath also thanked the Shrimpers Trust for their support during the campaign, which saw the organisation's name on the under-18 squad's shirts for a 15th consecutive season.



The Trust has run coaches to all 24 away first-team fixtures this season covering a total of 6,518 miles, and three supporters have travelled with the organisation to all these matches. These top travelers were presented with a framed montage of the grounds they have visited, as photographed by Dave Shields.

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The winners were Stephen Burt, Judith McMahon and Gary Williams, with Judith and Gary collecting their prints from head coach Kevin Maher alongside the top junior traveller, Sam Mailes, who has clocked up 4,644 miles after travelling to 19 away games. The Trust would like to thank all those supporters that have travelled with us this season and we look forward to welcoming you back.

The players remained behind for a short period at the end of the evening to catch up with supporters and sign autographs, and we'd like to thank both Kevin Maher and Danny Heath for bringing their squads to the event as well as all those involved in putting the evening together.

MEMBERSHIP

Life Membership (Total 281)

Welcome to New Life Members **Edward Ambrose** and **Colin Nicoll**.



Life Membership of the Trust currently costs £100.00 or £70 if aged 70 or over. An email account is required for Life Membership.

If you are interested in joining this group please contact our Membership Secretary, Paul Yeomanson via email at 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, and postal applications will also be accepted at **Shrimpers Trust, PO Box 5830, Southend-on-Sea, SS1 9FD**.

Welcome to New Members since the last Newsletter

Sean Allison, Edward Ambrose, Lee Arney, Andy Bartlett, Lee Baynton, Jake Bolton, Kelly Bolton, Matt Bolton, Daley Cleverley, Paul Gordon, Jack Hodges, Anthony Pearce, James Taylor, James Thomas, Derek Walden and **Tina Weston**.

***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 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 ***

FUNDRAISING

100 Club

The latest winners in the scheme, pulled out of the hat during weekly draws since the last newsletter were **Mrs C. Harvey, Mike Smith, Andrew Perry, Paul Yeomanson, Gareth Rowe, Trevor Hardy, Paul Strutt, John Freemantle, Neil Whitehead, Tony Gardener, Gordon Harvey and John Onslow.**

The nature of the 100 Club means the more people that sign up, then the bigger the weekly prize.

100 Club Application Form and Standing Order Form are available from the Fundraising Page on the Trust Website or from the Trust Information Stand in the Shrimpers Bar so why not join up and put yourself in with a chance of winning the weekly prize.

For further information, you can contact Alan Perry at alanperry4@hotmail.com or by calling 07901 845012.

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 £31 per week at the present time.

Quid-a-Goal

Our Quid a Goal scheme is now finished for the 2021/22 Season.



The total at the close of the season is £1,472.00. Thank you for generous pledges!

Alan Perry is in the process of writing to all those that took part with the amounts owing for each pledge.

Details of next Season's QAG Scheme will be included in our next Newsletter

FORTHCOMING FUNDRAISING EVENT

CURRY NIGHT

**Wednesday 22nd June 2022.
The Tandoori Parlour, Hart Road, Thundersley.**

The evening begins at 7.30pm and the cost will be £15.00 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: 07901 845012 or by email: alanperry4@hotmail.com



SHRIMPERS TRUST ON SOCIAL MEDIA



Follow us on twitter @shrimperstrust and like and follow us on Facebook “ShrimpersTrust” to keep up to date with all our latest news and events.

You can also follow shrimperstrust on Instagram and you can connect with us on LinkedIn at www.linkedin.com/company/75033660

The **SHRIMPERS TRUST**
OFFICIAL AWAY SUPPORTERS TRAVEL
ORGANISER FOR SOUTHEND UNITED F.C.

07892 905338 | travel@shrimperstrust.co.uk | www.shrimperstrust.co.uk

[facebook.com/sufcofficialawaytravel](https://www.facebook.com/sufcofficialawaytravel) | twitter.com/shrimperstrust

We also have a dedicated Away Travel Facebook Page “sufcofficialawaytravel” where you can find all the latest details on the Official Away Travel for Southend United.

23rd May 2022