



Trust Statement – 20th September 2023

The Shrimpers Trust is embarking on a membership drive, with our initial target being to reach 1906 members to mark the year of Southend United's formation.

We have already greeted over 200 new Trust members over the past fortnight, representing an increase of over 20% in our adult membership numbers. We welcome each and every one, as well as thanking our existing members, but we are now encouraging all Southend United supporters to join the organisation.

When Judge Prentis told the High Court on 23rd August 2023, "If this were not a football club, with the particular attachment to its fans...I would be winding them up today," he confirmed what the current owner, Ron Martin, refuses to acknowledge; that the club's fans are its biggest asset.

During the past year, the Shrimpers Trust has worked tirelessly to safeguard the club's short-, medium- and long-term interests, hosting online meetings with other supporters' groups, establishing a hardship fund for club staff that had not been paid, lobbying local and national MPs and liaising with Southend-on-Sea City Council and prospective new owners.

At the beginning of the 2023/24 season, we launched a monthly members survey to ensure that we hear your voices on a regular basis, as well as consulting regularly with other supporters' trusts and the Football Supporters Association in our attempts to protect the future of the club.

This week, we submitted an expression of interest in applying to the UK Government's Community Ownership Fund, designed to help us explore the potential of bringing ownership of the Roots Hall freehold and its associated facilities back into the hands of those who value it most: the local community of Southend-on-Sea.

We have been able to do this in the knowledge that we represented almost 1000 Southend United supporters. However, our mandate grows stronger, our voice grows louder and our ability to serve the fanbase is greatly enhanced with every single person that signs up.

By joining the Shrimpers Trust you'll become part of a community that covers the globe, with members from as far afield as Australia, New Zealand, China, Singapore, Spain, Canada and the United States of America. The cost for adults is £7 for one year, or £5 per year if joining for multiple years. Life membership is £100 (or £70 for over-70s).

You'll be joining an organisation that helps to bring disadvantaged groups to Roots Hall as part of our social inclusion project, that formed the Southend United Ex-Players Association (SUEPA), possibly the largest ex-players association in the world, to celebrate the achievements of our former heroes, that organises away travel to all first-team fixtures and runs social events throughout the season.

The Shrimpers Trust seeks to promote supporter influence, giving fans and the community more of a say in the running and ownership of Southend United; to represent supporters and the local community by being a democratic voice; to promote community engagement, and request the same of the football club.

We aim to encourage good governance, and influence Southend United FC to operate democratically, fairly, sustainably, transparently and with financial responsibility as well; and to be inclusive, open and accessible to all supporters of the club regardless of their age, income, location, ethnicity, gender, disability, sexuality or religious or moral beliefs.

So, please sign up today. Together we are Southend, United. #JoinThe1906

The Shrimpers Trust Board.

