



Supporters Group Statement – 21st September 2023

The combined supporters' groups of Southend United FC acknowledge the statement released yesterday by Justin Rees on behalf of a consortium that is interested in buying the football club.

We are hugely grateful for the much-needed clarity provided by the statement. However, we are frustrated that the current owner's lack of communication has caused Justin to feel the need to do his job for him.

The Shrimpers Trust have held positive discussions with Justin and continue to make themselves available to him. However, whilst they are aware of his thoughts regarding Roots Hall, they don't yet know the full details of his wider proposals nor the identities of other consortium members. The Trust look forward to having sight of, and hopefully endorsing, these proposal details soon. In the meantime, they would be doing themselves and the supporters a disservice if they did not continue to hold conversations with other interested parties and relevant stakeholders, as part of their efforts to help secure Southend United's future and push for the best deal for the club.

With that being said, the combined supporters' groups still call upon Mr. Martin to do the right thing. He might believe that he is "giving the club away", but that is a fallacy. The time for defiance, arrogance and posturing has passed. He has stubbornly clung on for far too long out of greed, and the existence of a 117-year-old community asset now hangs in the balance as a consequence of his tyrannical tenure as owner. He is already well on the way to cementing himself, and his family by extension, as local villains and as a blueprint for selfish and bad ownership in English football – the "Martin Model".

The supporters are more informed than ever about the Martin family's web of businesses. We are confident, therefore, that public action could be coordinated to hamper the family's ability to develop property in Southend in the future, by frustrating planning applications via democratic mechanisms. We believe Mr. Martin to be unfit and improper, both as the owner/custodian of a football club and as a co-applicant for a publicly-funded real estate development, and our desire and ability to make conducting business difficult for him and his family, should he not do the right thing by Southend United FC, must not be underestimated.

The biggest asset of Southend United is its unparalleled fanbase, and we are aiming to show it once again this Saturday. We call upon all supporters, including those who are currently choosing to stay away, to join us in a peaceful anti-Ron Martin, pro-Southend United march from Pier Hill to Roots Hall ahead of the home game vs. Fylde. More details and timings can be found on the poster released yesterday. We want this to be our biggest show of strength and unity yet, so bring your flags, banners and voices and meet us at Pier Hill or join us en-route.