

## **SUFC HISTORY PROJECT GROUP ('THE GROUP') - MINUTES OF MEETING**

**DATE:** 4 September 2025 (by video conference) commencing at 7.00 pm

**GROUP MEMBERS PRESENT:** Andrew Leeder (Chair), Richard Coxell, Rob Craven, Sam Duckworth, Paul FitzGerald, Dave Goody, Paul Hill, Peter Miles

**ALSO PRESENT:** Justin Rees (COSU) (items (1) to (4) only)

**MINUTES DISTRIBUTION:** the Group, Trust Board members, Justin Rees, Tom Lawrence, Rylee Doe, club website

**APOLOGIES:** Michelle Gargate, Paul Napper, James Schooley,

### **1. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING 10 MARCH 2025**

Agreed and were available on the club and Trust websites.

JR had been invited to attend the meeting, and RC was welcomed back to the Group.

### **2. MATTERS ARISING AND OTHER POST-MEETING ACTIONS**

**2.1 Box corridor project** – AL reported that Dave Shields was aiming to deliver the remaining seven prints to the club next week.

**ACTION - AL**

**2.2 Sid Broomfield** - it was noted that a meeting with Sid's family members should be 'low-key', JR undertook to propose date options to SD.

**ACTION - SD**

**2.3 Legacy numbers** - a meeting with Rylee (involving AL, DG and PM) to kick-off planning for this, for launch in time for our 120<sup>th</sup> club anniversary, would be arranged shortly.

**ACTION - AL**

**2.4 Memorabilia cataloguing** - this had been delayed but would be moved forward shortly. Since the last meeting memorabilia had been removed from a club cupboard to a safe place elsewhere in Southend to protect it from further degradation (as much of it was in a poor condition due to leaks etc). The plan was now to return it to a different space at Roots Hall on 12.09.25.

JR viewed that the Group, or perhaps a future museum trust, should be the owners/custodians of all club memorabilia to ensure it was properly cared for.

A visit by a local museum expert to consider restoration of the items had been arranged by SD for 26.09.25 with members of the Group present (a club representative should also attend).

**ACTION - SD/AL**

**2.5 Museum** - a tour of the Charlton Athletic, AFC Wimbledon and Exeter City club museums by JR/AL had taken place on 22/23.08.25. Lots learned, and useful contacts for future help cemented. See (4) below regarding further discussions/actions.

**2.6 Website** – action here was now under consideration in conjunction with the cultural diversity project (see (5) below).

**2.7 Match programmes** - commencing a catalogue to record match programmes held (and then reserving those so that only any duplicates were made available for sale) had been put on the

back-burner due to other priorities. It was agreed that progress should, if possible, be made prior to the next Meet The Blues Day (MTBD)/programme fair.

**ACTION - AL**

JR mentioned that a club announcement regarding the next MTBD would be made very shortly.

- 2.8 History presentation to groups** - PM and DG now had a presentation ready (which had been shared with all Group members) for the WI presentation on 17.09.25. Led by MG, the plan was to consider rolling this out to other social groups in the area.

**ACTION - MG/PM/DG**

- 2.9 Shrimpers Tales (now re-named 'Roots & All')** - the book had been very well received, and a launch party had been held in the Shrimpers Bar on 18.07.25. Circa 400 copies had been sold to date – this was much lower than expected primarily due to MTBD not happening in July/August as had been expected. Further marketing opportunities to be considered, including club shop plus other areas on a match day in the lead up to Christmas. JR added that, as a minimum, copies would be purchased for all COSU members, and possibly other club personnel.

**ACTION - AL**

- 2.10 Interviewing Past Players** - AL had met Jimmy Thomson in Scotland on 18.05.25 - it had been a successful visit and a summary had been put on SUEPA social media (though no interview had been recorded). AL added that other recent articles regarding past players (e.g. Sutherland) had been well received, and that further ones were currently planned for Bolan and Halse. JR viewed that the club and the Group should work together on getting some video stories with past players recorded.

**ACTION - AL**

- 2.11 Chris Barnard** – the memorabilia had been collected by AL on 28.04.25 and should make a suitable display for a cabinet (see (4) below).

**3. SHRIMPERS BAR UPDATE**

It was noted that the future of the Shrimpers Bar was a consideration for the Group as this could potentially be used to show memorabilia displays prior to future ground redevelopment.

JR advised that the club Board had met on 01.09.25 and declined an initial refurbishment proposal on the grounds of cost taking in to account that any refurb would only have a limited lifespan due to future ground plans. However, he added that the Board were still open to ideas if a way forward could be made to contain cost, perhaps with some fundraising taking place.

There was a wide-ranging discussion at the meeting regarding practicalities for a refurb, what might be considered as essential items, what might be re-useable, and the use of voluntary labour. It was noted that security was also a key consideration. JR was meeting with others to consider the toilet facilities at the Bar on 06.09.25, and the intention was for a further proposal to be formed and a decision made within two weeks. SD was liaising with JR on refurb issues.

It was noted that, subject to the refurb, there was good potential for a number of events to be held at the Bar, including future SUEPA evenings, comedy and music events, club occasions, plus various community club meetings. It could also be made available for hire generating a small hire income as well as bar profits.

**ACTION - SD**

Due to the uncertainty regarding the Bar refurb it was noted that a SUEPA event planned for 25.10.25 would now be held at the Essex County Bowls Club (a venue used for previous SUEPA events). However, a Q&A with a former player scheduled for 07.11.25 would take place at the Bar.

#### **4. MUSEUM**

Following the museum tour (see 2.5 above), AFC Wimbledon had offered six display cabinets that they no longer needed, and a price had been agreed. It was agreed that the purchase should proceed and AL would arrange for transport to the club (a storage space at Roots Hall had been offered by the club). The cost would be met from the SUEPA Fund.

Depending on the outcome of the refurb issue (see (4) above), it was noted that the Bar could potentially be used to house a limited memorabilia display prior to ground redevelopment. It was viewed that this would further enhance the appeal of the Bar, and be a way of the Group taking some valuable initial steps in the museum field in the lead up to the potential for a more dedicated space post redevelopment.

AL considered that it was vital to start something at the earliest opportunity to avoid items being lost forever - experience (and views from other clubs) had shown that there can be a wealth of items stored by fans who might be only too willing to donate them to a properly established museum trust and that all too often such items can be lost forever when someone passes away. He added that, only a couple of days ago, a fan had made contact to offer donation of an extensive club shirt collection if a future museum were to be set up.

**ACTION - AL**

#### **5. CULTURAL DIVERSITY PROJECT**

The potential Sporting Heritage grant for this project mentioned at the last meeting (see (2.6) above) had been successfully applied for, and PF reported that half of the £1,500 sum had now been received (with the balance due shortly).

Significant progress on the project had been made, with 12 players lined up to make contributions – interviews, where appropriate, were being undertaken by PH, and SD was working with PF on design for a series of collectable cards (which would be sold to help fund the project costs in excess of those covered by the grant). A number of schools were being contacted by PH for lesson presentations to roll out the programme (which might then be used as a template by PH for use with other clubs as part of his work for Show Racism the Red Card).

PF was in the process of considering website actions for hosting the project online - cost and accessibility issues were briefly discussed.

All agreed that the excellent work here needed to be promoted so that fans were aware of what was being undertaken - PF undertook to work with SD on this.

It was noted that a condition of the grant was that progress to a certain level had to be made by 30.09.25, with completion (in line with very broad parameters) by 31.03.26.

**ACTION - PF, SD, PH**

#### **6. GROUP WAY FORWARD**

AL led a brief discussion regarding the way forward for the Group. It was noted that the Group's work to date had mostly been publicised via SUEPA social media.

There was also the long-standing Southend United History page run by DG/PM on X which both viewed should continue as a separate standalone entity.

AL considered that it was not currently practical for a further separate social media set-up to be established just to promote the work undertaken by the Group, so it was agreed that, for the time being, the current process of using SUEPA social media remained appropriate.

There was some discussion regarding setting up a charitable organisation for museum work (a route followed by other club museums) - AL undertook to explore options.

**ACTION - AL**

**7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- 8. 7.1 Previous grounds/blue plaque** - PM advised that DG and himself had submitted an application to have blue plaques on sites adjacent to the club's old grounds at The Kursaal and the old Southend Stadium at Grainger Road but had yet to receive any response. It was understood however that, outside of London, no formal authority consent was required, so simply the agreement of the owner of the site where the plaque would be placed was required. SD advised that his workplace was on Grainger Road so that could be used for a plaque, and he could contact the Council regarding The Kursaal site - he undertook to liaise with PM/DG on this. AL proposed that the cost of the plaques could be met by the SUEPA Fund, which was agreed.

**9. ACTION - PM/DG/SD**

**7.2 Training ground naming** - PM advised that he had proposed to the club about having the training ground named after the club's founder Oliver Trigg, and undertook to follow this up with JR.

**ACTION - PM**

**7.3 Executive Box naming** - since the last meeting the club had asked the Group to provide names for who it considered to be the most iconic players since the move to Roots Hall in 1955, and the requested 15 names had been duly provided. The club had since had name plates made, using monies from the sponsorship of SUEPA by JLS Building Services, and these had now been put in place. AL mentioned that further work was being undertaken for the club by a fan (Finn Howard) to provide brief biography sheets for each player which it was understood would be placed in each box. PM and AL had assisted Finn with the statistics and text.

**7.4 1980/81 Division Four trophy** - RC proposed that it might be an idea to see if a replica of the trophy could be made. AL added that use of replica trophies at the club museums visited always proved to be a popular feature. It was agreed that this should be explored, and RC undertook to contact the National Football Museum who held the trophy.

**ACTION - RCo**

**7.5 Backpass article** - AL advised that he had drafted an article about the museum tour (see 2.5) for consideration by the magazine's editor.

**ACTION - AL**

**10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

To be determined (held on a 'need' basis but possibly within the next two months).

The meeting closed at 8.45 pm