



Candidate Statement

PAM WILKINS



I was born and live in Portsmouth and have been a Pompey supporter for over 50 years, as were my parents and grandparents before me. I am a Fratton End season ticket holder with my brother, his daughter and grandson. I became involved with the early days of PST because it felt better to be doing something rather than just standing by and watching while our Club died. At the first open meeting I volunteered for the steering committee, and was then elected, and then subsequently elected to the Board. I have served on the Trust Board from the beginning. I take the minutes at meetings, I run the PST office at the Pompey Bus on home match days behind the Fratton End, where people can join the Trust, ask a question or just drop by for a chat. Not everyone wants to communicate by email or on social media. I attend the Tony Goodall Fans' Conference and represent the TGFC at the Safety Advisory Group meetings. I am the PST Inclusion Officer and have worked with the Disabled Supporters Association in meetings with the Club.

During those first few years the Trust went from hoping to get representation at PFC, to buying and owning 48% of our Club - a massive achievement and one we could never have dreamed of at that first open meeting in November 2009. In the past four years our Club has become one of the few stable and solvent clubs in the Football League, being run on a sound financial footing with a sensible playing budget and our own training ground. An achievement we should all be proud of.

For about six years I represented the Football Supporters' Federation (FSF) Southern Division at the FSF National Council. I stood down when I was elected to the PST Board, because with the then worsening situation at Pompey, there was so much work to do here. I still attend Southern Division meetings. Working with the FSF has given me valuable contacts within football and knowledge of ongoing supporter issues, many of which are relevant to Pompey fans. Attending FSF meetings and listening to the problems other supporters have at their clubs has given me a strong belief that football supporters have a right to representation at Club board level and a say in the running of their football club. It was for that reason that I spoke out against the 100% sale of PFC to the Eisners. With no supporter representation at Club board level we will never again have the ability to help direct the future of our Club, or have a future say on who it is sold on to.

Our football clubs are so much more than just a business, they are part of our communities, our heritage, our histories and our memories. The only consistent

factor in any club is the Supporters; Owners, managers and players all change, supporter loyalty passes on through the generations.

But PST is a democratic organisation and the shareholders have voted by a large majority to sell their shares. The Trust now needs to find a new way forward and a new role to play at PFC.

The Trust will have three members of the PST Board on the Heritage Advisory Board, and I see the Trust's future as representing supporter views at those meetings, as well as the safeguarding of the Club's heritage. Hopefully the HAB will also have some say in how the new owners take our Club forward. Exiting times for PFC in which I look forward to playing a part.

I have always been strongly in favour of the return of safe standing areas, and hope that future development at Fratton Park can include rail seating safe standing areas. Many supporters, including myself, prefer to stand. Many do not or are not able to and object to having people standing in front of them. The reinstating of standing areas would give people a choice and thus stop the conflict between the two groups, or with stewards.

I also believe in the right of football supporters not to be treated differently just because we choose to spend our leisure time supporting our football teams. Watching football is not a crime.

Play Up Pompey!