



BY THE FANS FOR THE FANS

Candidate Statement: Michael Saunders

Who I am and what I've been up to as a serving PST Executive Board Member:

A lifelong Pompey fan (25 years as a season ticket holder) and locally based Registered Architect, I have served on the PST Board for the last three years with the defined remit of Stadium & Infrastructure portfolio.

My Manifesto from three years ago talked of the fans being more involved with the club on how it could move PFC forwards in terms of stadium and infrastructure. I proposed the PST being a conduit between the fans and the Club for making this happen and in the early days as a Board Member collated the fans survey requested by CSI as to what we wanted to see change at Fratton Park. That information was very useful and has informed much of what I have done since.

Then we faced the collapse of CSI and the bid process began. My work to date has included:

- **Tesco Development:** I was part of the working group within the Club tasked with overseeing PFC's interests in this deal. I successfully argued strongly to gain extra land for the Club behind the Fratton End and produced the layouts for the car parking behind the North Stand to meet the Club's needs. I've continued to liaise with the Club's lawyers on the legal matters of the deal.
- **Stadium Survey:** The Club's existing survey drawings of Fratton Park dated from the late 1990s. I have fully updated this in CAD to bring the plans up to date for the whole ground.
- **Wheelchair Accessible Facilities:** A series of feasibility studies to look at how extra wheelchair accessible sections could be incorporated into the current ground and meeting disabled fans to explain proposals and gain their views.
- **Training Ground:** I have been part of the training ground working group, designing the layout and producing all the drawings which formed the planning application, which was approved in July 2014. I continue to be involved in helping deliver the project and the second phase academy facilities.
- **Feasibilities of Fratton Park's Future:** Drawings and models produced for the club to give steer on how Fratton Park could be redeveloped into a minimum 30,000 all-seated capacity stadium.
- **Safe Standing:** Designs drawn up for possible new build and conversion of areas of Fratton Park to incorporate Safe Standing 'rail seats' or ease future conversion.



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Hopefully you will see there's been lots to do, all of which I have carried out in my own time, at my own cost and at no charge to the football club. The services I've provided on the training ground alone would have cost the Club a substantial sum in competitive professional fees.

Much of my work has gone on behind the scenes and without fanfare, although I endeavour to keep fans updated as much as possible on internet message boards and forums (as 'the_riddle') and have appeared on Express FM and had articles in The News and Sports Mail to cover the stadium and infrastructure issues at PFC.

What I see my role being for the next two years:

I'll keep this short and sweet. In terms of the next two years I'd like to be involved with:

- Seeing through the completion of the training ground and academy
- Through fans consultation, see a masterplan for how the club sees Fratton Park delivered into a 21st century football ground, retaining all the quirks which make it a real home, but providing the best facilities for match day fans and day to day commercial opportunities for the Club.
- Continue to work with the Club in improving all aspects of the match day facilities, including seeing the aspiration of better disabled supporters facilities realised.

My wider PST aims and aspirations:

I openly admit I'm not driven by the politics of the PST and I came to the Board quite independently having only ever met one previous Board Member before previously standing. There are areas such as governance and community where we have far better serving Board Members to push such issues forward than myself. My role has always been quite defined, but I do have strong opinions on the role of the PST and I'm prepared to take on board the views of the fans on such issues.

Therefore from the wider PST perspective, I'd like to see:

- A type of 'golden share' protecting at least 26% PST equity in PFC to ensure future security and the ability to veto votes if ever required to future safeguard the Club.
- The PST and Presidents having even more of a working relationship.
- Continue to improve communications with fans.
- To spread the word of what we've achieved to the wider football community.



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Finally I'd like to say something about the harmony of the PST Board over the last 3 years, which for me has been a major factor in the success of the PST in co-ordinating and delivering a successful bid to make fan ownership happen at Fratton Park.

The Board Members past and present that I have worked with have all brought differing skills to the table, and whilst we've not always agreed on everything, a mutual respect and understanding has carried us through, and I sincerely hope my fellow Board Members standing for re-election are successful.

- Ashley Brown for his direction as Chair and delivering the bid.
- Mark Trapani for his business acumen and delivering the bid.
- Pam Wilkins for her diligence to the PST cause, manning the Trust Bus and doing all the small tasks no one else can.

All three deserve PST Members support.

To that end, I'd like to be able to join them once again on the PST Board to see through my work on the Stadium and Infrastructure issues at Portsmouth FC as we continue to make great strides for the fan ownership model.

I thank you for reading what I hope has been an informative Statement.

Michael Saunders BA(Hons) DipArch MA RIBA

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