

HEREFORD UNITED SUPPORTERS TRUST

ELECTION OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS - 2015/2016

Candidate Statement

Andy Carr

I am standing for election to the board HUST, as I believe I will bring relevant skills, knowledge and enthusiasm to the board.

I am 37 years of age and live in Hereford, and have been watching football at Edgar Street since the age of five.

Throughout my time following Hereford United, I have always sought to get involved as much as possible since taking out my first Junior Bulls membership. Growing up watching my local club through the good (and mainly not so good) times has been a character-building experience for me, but one that has given me a lot of good memories.

As a match mascot on my birthday, I was too scared to talk to Darren Peacock and overawed at hearing the noise of the Meadow End from the pitch; as a ballboy a few years later, I was told to 'stop f**king timewasting' by the Colchester player-manager in the game where Chris Pike scored a hat-trick against three different 'keepers; as a supporter, I made what looked like a questionable decision to travel to Dagenham dressed as a Mexican for a Friday night game that was going to be on TV anyway (and thoroughly enjoyed my evening); as a target man for the supporters' team, my finest moment was undoubtedly lobbing the Morecambe goalkeeper from (at least) 45 yards- and then being played at left back in the next game.

I volunteered for the Official Website during the Graham Turner era, providing match reports and interviews, and once found Guy Ipoua collapsed in a shop doorway opposite Saxtys in the early hours of Sunday morning.

My interests away from Edgar Street are travel and watching live sport. As a fully paid-up member of the Barmy Army, I have seen both an Ashes win down under, and a 5-0 drubbing which strangely felt more familiar. I also sit on the committee of Hereford Live, a local community group dedicated to promoting live music, and helped to organise the recent 'Sounds of the Shire' festival which saw over 30 live acts play in eight different venues over nine consecutive days.

Having served as a co-opted board member since August 2015, I have seen from 'behind the scenes' the huge amount of work put in by a small but tireless band of volunteers in running the 50/50 Match Day draws, the Prize Bull draws, and the time needed to deal with member queries and those from the general public. But I have also seen areas that can improve – and need to do so- for HUST to be the force for good that its members want it to be. As someone who makes his living working in web design, social media and marketing, there is plenty for me to bring to the table to help make that happen.

Candidate: Andy Carr

Nominated by: Tristan Edwards and Richard Goodman

Candidate Statement

Russell Cheasley

I like many other Hereford United supporters was saddened to witness the demise of our great club, but I couldn't see how it could survive under its last owners. I joined the Trust in its early days, as I had felt so far detached from the club I supported that this looked a way of actually engaging with the club and offering a fans viewpoint. Even as the club was sliding to oblivion I answered the call to be part of the Fundraising Group to see what could be done to rescue the club.

Unfortunately time and the mountain of debt that was revealed meant that even the good foundations setup by this group we were never in a position to help save the club. We now have a new club and the supporters have a great opportunity to be part of their club much more than turning up and watching, but in being able to be heard and ensuring that the way the club is run is for the betterment of all supporters. I know some would have preferred a fully supporter led club, but whilst that hasn't happened, we still have a greater voice in our club than the majority of most other clubs. This is a great privilege and something that was only a very distant reality in the old Hereford United days, if the supporters had more say I would like to think United might still be around.

The Trust however must be at the forefront of helping push the club forward, but it must also be the voice of the supporters. It needs to help as much as it can 'to preserve and promote professional football in Hereford and the wider community', whilst being open and transparent and not afraid to address issues and concerns the supporters have with decisions made by the HFC Board, and work closely with the HFC Board to ensure we all work towards the shared aims of getting the club up the leagues and being sustainable.

Therefore I believe the main aims of the Trust over the next few years should be:

1. Provide a platform for 'a greater voice for all supporters' as stated on its webpage, so it needs to canvass its members to decide the direction of the Trust for the next 2-3 years

2. Detail the proposals for election of members to represent it on the Hereford FC Board
3. Put greater effort into raising the funds required to take its 50% share of Hereford FC
4. Seek to increase membership and participation in the running of the Trust.

The next couple of years are the most important for both Hereford FC and the Trust, unfortunately whilst Hereford FC has progressed the Trust has stagnated, paralysed by its loss of focus around its newly found position, and hampered by the demands of its remaining board members in delivering the ambitions of the Trust and Hereford FC. This is why I have decided to stand as a Trust board member, instead of debating what is or isn't happening I have made the decision to help push the Trust forward and hopefully become something all supporters want be part of. It isn't going to be easy but with support and help from its members, the club and the wider community it can be a success.

Candidate: Russell Cheasley

Nominated by: Steve Niblett and Will Cheshire

Candidate Statement

Tristan Edwards

I'm 35 years old, and live in Hereford. I got married just under 2 years ago and I work in engineering for a steel fabricating company. As part of a community group called 'Hereford Live' I've been involved in putting on live music in Herefordshire for nearly three years.

I've been going to Edgar Street since I was 8 years old. My first stand out memory as a fan would be our late goal to defeat Walsall 2-1 in the FA Cup 3rd Round in 1990, which set us up to play Man Utd at home in the next round. Later that same season I was lucky enough to be mascot for the Welsh Cup Semi Final 2nd leg at Edgar Street. I still have the photo with the team captains, Darren Peacock for us and Ian Rodgeron for Cardiff, both sporting haircuts that were very "of their time"!

Hereford United has been part of my life for almost as long as I can remember, and I've met many people that I consider to be my closest friends through watching this club home and away throughout the years. Because of this it was very painful seeing the club I love come to a slow, painful death. This is why I want to help make HUST the strong supporters body that I believe it needs to be to enable us to be in a position where we never have to go through that again.

I feel that HUST should play a large part in the running of our football club, and should do everything it can to make sure that supporters are informed about how their club is being run. Where it is possible to enable HUST members to be involved in the decision making process I would push for this to happen. With the fresh start that we've had we now have the opportunity for the supporters to have more of a say in the running of the club than ever, and we should not let that chance pass us by.

The HUST board is in place to represent the fan base, and if I am elected I will do my best to ensure that this is exactly what it does. I would do what I can to make sure that the board are open and honest with supporters. I believe that two way communication is key to making the supporters feel connected. Not only should supporters be kept informed, but they should also be provided

with channels in which they can express their concerns and ideas, knowing that they will be listened to and, where possible, acted upon.

Currently we are enjoying a very successful period on the pitch, and HFC appears to be very well run off the pitch, but history tells us we should never be complacent. As football fans we know that the good times probably won't last forever. Therefore, a strong supporters group is crucial to keep a watchful eye over the running of our football club, holding those at the helm to account if necessary, as well as assisting and providing a way for the membership to be involved in the (hopefully very long and successful) future of Hereford (United) Football Club.

If elected, I would push for absolute parity in the boardroom of the football club. I believe our aim should be for at least 50% of the HFC board to comprise of HUST representatives. I think that another aim should be to negotiate an extension to the time HUST has been given to purchase the maximum amount of ring-fenced shares in the club, to enable us to maximise the huge opportunity that we as supporters, the people that make this football club, have to safeguard its future. Let's not waste this opportunity.

Candidate: Tristan Edwards

Nominated by: Andy Carr and Gary Bradley

Candidate Statement

Craig Goodall

Fans of Hereford United will recall the voicemails from Tommy Agombar left on a fellow fans phone talking of 'the greatest cockney rip off'. The most famous little club in the land was being exploited for the value of the land which its stadium sat on. Supporters boycotted. The club folded. We all said: 'never again'.

The Phoenix rose from the ashes. But not a 100% fan owned club but a partnership where the club would be 50% privately owned with the other half owned by the supporters (should they be able to raise £250k).

Not fan 100% ownership sadly but an opportunity for a significant supporter influence nonetheless. But an influence that can only be leveraged through the cultivation of a strong and independent supporters trust.

Whilst HUST has achieved much in its short life span it is fair to say that it is currently in need of repair to move forward.

In order for a Hereford FC fans to be in a position to prevent our club falling into the wrong hands in the future we need a strong HUST. If elected my priorities would be:

1. Set a strong foundation by reviewing and updating the HUST Constitution and creating stronger governance. This would include a protocol for the appointment and removal of HUST appointed HFC Directors.
2. Engage the fans through regular consultation.
3. Give you the opportunity to hold the HUST Board to account through regular general meetings.
4. Seek to get the approval of the HUST Board to hold HUST Board meetings in public.
5. A sustainable football club where the club lives within its means and saves a percentage of its revenue for the future.

I'm a married father of two currently living in the Midlands. I work as a Committee Business and Governance Manager at a local authority. I've followed the Bulls since I was a young child and want to create a club that is protected for generations to come.

Candidate: Craig Goodall

Nominated by: Tim Burrows and Mitch Stansbury

Candidate Statement

Mike Langford

I am 64 Years old and live in Burghill. My employment with Lloyds Bank brought me to Hereford in 1988 as the manager of the Business Centre. In 1992 I moved to the Corporate Division as a Relationship Manager for the bank's bigger customers, turnover £2 million to £50 million, until I took retirement in 2006. I now work as a business manager for the Pipe Corporation Group in Burcott Road, one of my Lloyds Bank customers.

I have been the HUST Treasurer since September 2014 and it has been a busy job with the club in decline and then liquidation in December 2014. The support for the new Hereford FC has been immense and I believe that HUST has an essential part to play. Not only in terms of providing much needed finance, but also in providing 3 of the 7 directors on the Hereford FC Board. A strong HUST will enable Hereford FC to climb the Non-League ladder and hopefully back in the Football League. I would like to continue to give my time and skills so that this can be achieved.

Candidate: Mike Langford

Nominated by: Nigel Marks and Derek Pritchard

Candidate Statement

Andy Swift

Now retired, I had my own successful business in the barcode industry.

An avid football fan and enthusiastic Hereford Utd. supporter, season ticket holder, I decided to put my spare time, and previous experience, to good use and was co-opted onto the JHUST Board last April to take charge of the Prize Bull lottery. This is now running smoothly and generating much needed funds for share purchase. If elected, there are plans in place to increase the volume of ticket sales by appointing 'agents' and so create further interest in the Hereford population at large.

In addition to the lottery, I am also jointly responsible for the organisation of the successful 50/50 draw. Whilst the two above mentioned activities are responsible for good income, it is absolutely necessary to hold events throughout the year to help swell the coffers and help achieve our stated aim of at least a 50% shareholding in Hereford FC. Rest assured I am very much committed to helping the Trust reach that target.

I am married with two children and one grand-daughter and live in Burghill. Though I play golf and also deliver Meals on Wheels to the elderly, I have lots of spare time to devote to my roles within HUST.

It is imperative that we all work together to ensure the success of the new football club and provide the necessary finance to enable it to make rapid progress up the pyramid. In doing so it may well be possible to renegotiate the terms of the present setup and ultimately achieve a fan controlled club.

Candidate: Andy Swift

Nominated by: Karen Spooner and Derek Pritchard

Candidate Statement

Richard Tomkins

Supporting Hereford United / Hereford FC since around 1963, all I've ever wanted to be is a supporter. However, following the crisis of 1997 I joined HUISA and subsequently became HUISA chairman 1998-2000. They were some dark days, but we had then what we've got back now – a club and supporters working together – and I firmly believe we can build this club again. I joined HUST in its early days when it became the clear way forward and supported the boycott. Having won our club back we have such great support and goodwill we must now take full advantage.

The objectives we should set ourselves are:

1. Secure a long term lease on Edgar Street. Edgar Street is our home. It always will be. We must defend our right to play football here with vigour. We all know the so called plans for relocation of the past, they will not work.
2. Foster links locally, nationally and throughout football.
 - Herefordshire Council – an ally we must keep firmly on our side. They've helped in the distant and recent past, and they can help us again.
 - Member of Parliament – I cannot speak highly enough of Jesse Norman, or his predecessor Paul Keetch. The influence of our local MP should not be under-estimated. If our MP expresses an interest in us, it becomes much harder for others to brief against us.
 - United in the Community – the youth set up must continue to be fully supported. It shows us to be a community club and will bring through the players of tomorrow.
 - Supporters Direct – helped us eventually set up HUST. I sought their advice in 1999 when HUISA purchased shares in HUFC. Forming a trust wasn't quite the right time then, but now that we do have a trust in place, Supporters Direct have a wealth of guidance we can draw on.
 - Football Supporters Federation – the FSF is a strong voice for football fans UK wide.

We've got a lot of goodwill nationally and can build on this, and the time will come when we can probably help others too.

3. Build on the closeness we've enjoyed between supporters and team.

Nobody can doubt the close relationship between the current team and its supporters. Ultimately this is what will make Hereford FC a successful club. Fans Forums continue to be a good engine for this. We should also revive Player of the Year and Supporter of the Year awards.

By trade I'm a professionally qualified Project Manager.

Candidate: Richard Tomkins

Nominated by: Ian Mann and Pam Mann

Candidate Statement

Francis Williams

I was born in St Weonard's in 1951 and have been a Hereford supporter since 1966. In 1969 I left the county to embark on Teacher Training, which led to a successful 30 year teaching career in the Black Country, where I still reside. For the last 12 years I have been a Director of The Basement Recording & Rehearsal Studios in Dudley.

I have worked as a Volunteer with HFC since its inception and currently on match days as consultant sound engineer for the public Address, Control Room and Radio Hereford FC.

As an 'exile', I have always found it difficult to always keep in touch with what is going on at Edgar Street, except on match days when I have been able to attend.

In my experience, generally within any organisation, members like to feel that they have a personal contact with that organisation giving them a voice.

As a HUST Board member I would try to ensure that others, who like me, are exiled from the HR postcode would have a more fulfilled line of communication to the Board's activities, and would provide a portal for views to be expressed from a wider area within the UK and Abroad.

Although I have strong opinions which I would voice as an individual on the Board, my primary role would be to voice the views of others, even if they conflict with my own. While it is relatively easy for local members to canvass Board members on match days, members who cannot attend all matches are disadvantaged in representation, which I would attempt to alleviate.

There are currently a large number of members who fall into this category as is shown by the listening figures of Radio Hereford FC, who regularly attain listening figures of between 300 and 500, and recently peaked nearly 100 for an away game, even outnumbering our fantastic 800 travelling fans.

I would use social media, email accounts, and hopefully, Radio Hereford FC to get information out to this cohort, and act as a collator of opinions and ideas to

report to the Board. Hopefully, in this way, membership can be strengthened and give HUST a solid voice within Hereford FC and the wider community.

Candidate: Francis Williams

Nominated by: Derek Pritchard and Keith Hall