



## Introduction to Fan Investment at Hartlepool United FC

The current owner of Hartlepool United Football Club, Mr Raj Singh, is looking to sell the Football Club to a responsible individual or consortium. This is an opportunity for fans to be fully involved in the future of the Club using an ownership model that incorporates fans as shareholders via Hartlepool United Supporters Trust (HUST).

In the course of this summary, HUST will briefly set out how this can be achieved and the benefits that this can bring to the Football Club, financially, for the supporters and owners alike, and to the wider community.



## About HUST

- HUST was established in 2015 and is one of more than 200 Football Supporters' Association (FSA) affiliated Supporters' Trusts established throughout Premier League, Football League, and non-league football clubs.
- HUST is an independent, democratically run supporters' group that seeks to represent the views of the fans to the Club and helps promote communication from the club to the fans.
- All Trusts are formally-constituted legal bodies and HUST, like many others, is registered as a Community Benefit Society (CBS).
- HUST members make and approve policy, and they elect a Board annually.
- HUST members would ultimately vote to approve any investment into the football club and vote for a preferred member to become a fan-elected representative on the board of Hartlepool United. This makes HUST a truly democratic fan organisation.

**Club. Community. United.**

## Financial Benefits of Partnership

- Since the FSA (previously Supporters Direct) was established, supporters' trusts have collectively brought a financial injection of well over £30 million of new investment to football and rugby.
- Currently 25 clubs are owned by their Trusts, with 65 now having board representation and over 100 with shareholdings at their clubs.
- HUST have been growing funds since its inception with the aim of investing into the football club as shareholders.
- HUST will continue to raise funds independently for the benefit of the club (but with the support of the club) to maintain a shareholding.
- It is widely acknowledged that where fans feel ownership and pride in a club, financial benefits are seen, helping to create a more sustainable base for league success.

## Community Benefits

- HUST believe that the football club should be a key focal point within the community and this mutually benefits the football club and the community it represents.
- A shared ownership model would enable further development of community initiatives that HUST have continually championed, such as its Community Ticket Fund. These initiatives have broken down barriers that individuals may face in attending games.
- HUST has previously linked up with local groups that have included people with disabilities such as autism and Downs Syndrome; a local LGBTQ+ charity; those dealing with homelessness; refugee and asylum seekers.
- HUST are also proud partners of the HerGameToo movement embracing the contribution women make to the game both as players and supporters.
- HUST have an excellent relationship with ex-players, with many participating in our annual golf day event, charity football matches and other events.

## Safeguarding the Club

- In terms of engagement and safeguarding of the football club, HUST have constructively challenged existing and previous custodians of the football club on significant matters, where we believe that supporters should be consulted and more informed.
- There are benefits to both owners and fans where there is transparency and understanding of different points of view over the running of the Club.
- HUST also helped secure an asset of community value on Victoria Park.
- Hartlepool was recently included in the creation of a mayoral development corporation. HUST engaged with Tees Valley Mayor Ben Houchen requesting reassurances on the future of the ground and surrounding land, with Mr Houchen confirming he is willing to engage with HUST on any future matters that impact the football club.



**Community Tickets:  
Autism Acceptance Month**

#TogetherUnited



### Key Principles underpinning a Partnership

- HUST will acquire a minority stake in Hartlepool United, allowing supporters to be proudly part-owners of the football club, while contributing financially to its success.
- For HUST, through its members, to democratically appoint a fan representative to sit as a non-executive director on the Board of Hartlepool United.
- That the principles of fan ownership and formal engagement should ultimately be seen as an opportunity that leads to greater financial security for the Football Club through higher season ticket sales, improved match day offer and enhanced retail opportunities.
- That through a formal memorandum of understanding the Club commits to a culture of fan engagement with all recognised supporter groups, in line with the recommendations of FSA / EFL and relevant governing bodies.

- That formal consultation with fans is held on any significant matters that may impact on the football club including ground ownership, investment priorities, change of ground name, stadium upgrades, change to team colours etc.
- That the partnership develops, maintain and adheres to a formal equality, diversity and inclusion action plan to ensure the club continues to be a welcoming, friendly environment for the whole community.
- That the Club and fanbase further current community engagement initiatives, including utilising the playing staff, to reach out into the community to build significant ties with the town that the football club represents.
- In the longer term the Football Club would become an asset to the community by working with relevant partners to improve aspiration and opportunity to the residents of Hartlepool through football, sport and wellbeing.
- That the Club is structured to support staff retention, with a culture of respect and open dialogue.

### Next Steps

HUST strongly believe in a model of Shared Ownership that promotes and develops the football club as a Community Asset, with fans and owners working together for on field success.

If you would like to discuss this model further, along with the value HUST can bring to a partnership, please contact us via [chair@hufcsupporterstrust.org.uk](mailto:chair@hufcsupporterstrust.org.uk).

### Social Media and website:

Twitter - HUST\_1908  
Instagram - HUST1908  
Facebook - @HUFCSupportersTrust  
Website - [www.hufcsupporterstrust.org.uk](http://www.hufcsupporterstrust.org.uk)

#ClubCommunityUnited

The logo for the Football Supporters' Association (FSA) consists of the letters 'FSA' in a large, bold, black sans-serif font. A small green circle is positioned to the right of the 'A'. Below the letters, the full name 'FOOTBALL SUPPORTERS' ASSOCIATION' is written in a smaller, black, all-caps sans-serif font.

FOOTBALL SUPPORTERS' ASSOCIATION