

City Fans United / Chester FC – Board appointments – AGM 2015

Candidate Manifesto

The order of the candidates has been selected at random by the independent scrutineer

Ed Jones



Nominated by Tracey Smith and Arthur Keen

I am 41 years old, was born and brought up in Mickle Trafford Chester and have supported Chester FC for 33 years.

I am married to Jane and have a daughter named Tilly who is 6 years old.

I work locally in Pulford for a company called Card One Banking where I work within their Customer Services Team.

In my spare time as well as supporting my beloved Chester FC, I enjoy spending time with my Family and enjoy exercising regularly.

Recently, as many of you will know, I've been on a massive personal weight loss drive and I have managed to lose over 5 stones in just 26 weeks. In doing this I have completed both the 28 mile Trans Pennine Mighty Hike from Manchester to Sheffield and the 22 mile Gower Macmaraphon in Swansea.

In completing these Charity Hikes I have completed fundraising and have raised £2000 for Macmillan Cancer Support.

My support of Chester FC began some 33 years ago when my Grandad first took me to games at the Club's former Sealand Road Stadium. I was only 8 years old back then, but from the very first game I was hooked. I have had the pleasure to witness so many good players pull on the blue and white stripes of this fine Club of ours, particular favourites are Andy Holden, Stuart Rimmer, Milton Graham and Daryl Clare.

I am so proud of what we have achieved since the reformation of the Club in 2010 and I have enormous pride in not only being a Supporter of this wonderful Club but also as one of its owners!!!

I have previously served for Chester City ISA where I was the Social Secretary. I have also assisted the Junior Blues as Membership Secretary and helped them to secure extra funding from local businesses to aid and support their efforts in holding events for our Junior Supporters who are the future of our Club.

I am also currently part of Chester FC's Fundraising Committee led by Tracey Smith, Chester FC's Commercial Manager.

I would very much like to continue to support our Club and be given the opportunity to serve on the Club's board; something I would consider to be a massive privilege.

I would give my all to help in any way I can to help the Club prosper.

In terms of what I can offer, I feel that my main area of strength would be in the role of Fundraising. As demonstrated in my own personal time, I have raised a significant amount of money for Charity in a very short period of time. I already work closely with Tracey Smith and the Club's Fundraising Committee in this area so I deem this to be the area I could help focus my efforts within.

As a group we are always looking to develop fundraising and come up with new ideas that can help support the Club financially as well as our efforts within the local community.

I can also assist in other areas such as Match day. I am currently a Season Ticket holder with my very good friend Arthur Keen in the Legends Lounge. I would like to help enhance the experience for Legends Lounge Members, and ensure that we offer the very best we can to Club Sponsors who are an essential part of the Club's revenue stream.

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Russell Warburton



Nominated by Tracey Smith and Richard Smith

Personal

I was born in Holywell, North Wales in 1961 (54). I attended Holywell High School leaving in 1977 with 6 qualifications in English Language, English Literature, History, Maths, Geography and Woodwork. I played football from a very early age representing Flintshire School Boys. After leaving school I played for Point of Ayr, Prestatyn Town, Halkyn, Brynford, Rhydymwyn and Holywell F.C. When I retired from football (after suffering an injury) I managed Holywell Town for two seasons and Holywell reserves. I also played cricket for Halkyn C.C. and represented Flintshire and North Wales in this sport. I have two children, Stephanie and Kevin and four Grandchildren, Mia, Lucie, Lexi and Harri and my partner Karen.

Career

During this employment I attended Deeside College studying Business Studies which included Economic and Law. After six months I joined I.T.T Electrical Wholesalers based in Holywell, where I worked my way up from Stores to Telesales. I remained with I.T.T. for seven years before being offered another job with Edmundson Electrical, another multi-national wholesaler, to set up a new branch in Rhyl. After three years I was offered the opportunity to become a Sales Rep for the same company based in Wrexham (Sorry to mention this name!) I stayed with Edmundson, Wrexham for a further twelve years progressing to Sales Manager and then Assistant Manager, being responsible for twenty two staff.

In 2000 I was approached by WF Electrical, another multi-national company to become their new Branch Manager at Deeside. I remained with the company for two years, growing the business from a turnover of 600K to over 1 million. The company then sold to a competitor and I decided to leave and start up my own electrical business G.D.R. Electrical Supplies with two work colleagues. The turnover of the business went from 0 to 700K in the first year, to over a million in its second year, employing seven people in 2005. We sold the business to Express Electrical. Once the business was sold, I set up another company with my Son, Ideal Lighting, based in Holywell, North Wales, where I still am today. We not only sell to retail/wholesalers and trade but have a fast growing E-Commerce business with a turnover in excess of 300k this year and still growing. My Son later moved on to set up his own contracting business.

Chester

I watched my first football game in Chester in 1973 and have followed Chester ever since, travelling to many games home and away and I am a season ticket holder.

The stand out season for me, of course, is 1974/75, memories of which will stay with me forever. Happy times! I have sponsored the club in other ways too. Sponsorship of the games, match balls, raffle prizes through my company and will continue to do so.

If elected to the board, I can offer my experience of business, sales, marketing, purchasing, negotiating skills and use my financial knowledge which I have gained from working in large companies and running my own business for the past thirteen years to help promote the club. I promise to help all I can to take the club to the next level and eventually back into the football league where we belong.

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Alan Povey



Nominated by Andrew Povey and Tom Jones

Whether it be Chester City or Chester FC, this fantastic club has been a part of my life for almost 30 years. The late great Harry McNally years at Sealand Road and the final game at our old home in 1989. The travelling to Macclesfield for our “home” games whilst in exile and then of course the return to Chester in 1992. A return that promised so much and gave us all so much hope for the future. The Graham Barrow promotion and then the relegation the following season. Terry Smith and relegation to non-league football for the first time in our history, and then of course 2004’s promotion back to the Football League. Being a Chester fan has forever been about clinging on to hope and joy before being followed by disappointment and so on. I’ve seen it all since being taken to my first game at the age of 3 back in 1986, but I would not have changed it for the World. Each of these moments in our history brought us to where we are today.

We will all remember where we were on 10th March 2010; the day we as supporters could finally take back our club. After so many years of mistrust and mismanagement we could finally dictate our own destiny and fulfil our own ambitions. The road would be long and difficult, we all knew that, but from that day on we all became responsible for maintaining football in Chester.

I want to stand for the board of Chester FC because I am passionate about our club. Each time I walk down Bumpers Lane and approach the ground, a huge sense of pride fills me when I think about how far we have come. The legacy of the founding board members will always be a difficult one to follow; they laid the very foundations of the new Chester FC, but if I can help take the club forward in some way, then I will be immensely proud to be part of the club’s next chapter.

This great club has so much more to offer and I want to see it be the very best it can.

I can provide the board with some of the skills I have developed and grown in my 10 years in Management. I have the ability to bring people together: communicate, engage and involve. I am dedicated and pro-active and always strive for a positive outcome. There will times when difficult decisions need to be made, but I know I have the credentials to help the rest of the board make those decisions when needed.

Primarily, I want my skills to be used in helping strengthen the bridge between supporters and the club and to let each and every person know it remains their club.

It's more important than ever that we engage with the many communities that surround our city.

- The board needs to grow the family friendly environment we all continue to be so proud of; it needs to be where parents will want to bring their children on a Saturday afternoon and schools bring their pupils.
- The club needs to become a focal point for people in the city. They need to know that we continue to be a safe and inclusive club and offer more than just 90 minutes of football on a Saturday afternoon or Tuesday evening.
- I want to help increase honesty and transparency and I want to be part of a board that when it says it's doing its best, it truly is. If supporters want answers, they will get them in a timely and sufficient manner. They may not always be the answers they want, but everybody who has an interest in our club has the right to know what's going on, both on and off the pitch.
- I want to see the growth and return of 2010 levels of CFU membership and reassure everybody they can and do have a voice. It's our club after all.
- The future of our club is today's youngsters. We must engage with them and make them want to wear the famous blue and white.
- Our dedicated volunteers need to continue to know they are appreciated, but we must do more to attract new help too. Every pair of hands in this club is important to the ongoing "work in progress" and I want to make sure we have the right people for the relevant roles.

I truly hope that I am given the opportunity to represent and serve our club. It would be an honour to know that I am doing what I can to see our club continue to grow in the way it has in the last 5 and a half years and I promise that I will do everything in my power to see that it becomes better than ever.

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Nathan Auty



Nominated by Mark Howell and Gary Dutton

My name is Nathan Auty, I currently work in an administrative and clerical role at one of the City's largest employers (Countess of Chester Hospital) and I am a husband to Ashley and father to Harrison. With my 30th birthday looming on the horizon I have become more politically-minded in recent months to the stage where I have decided to put my name in the hat to stand for election to the Board of Directors of our great co-operative football club.

Like many of us, I consider myself a "life-long" supporter of Chester City and Chester FC and I honestly share the views and opinions that a proportion of our membership and fan base hold when they say that they feel the club has lost its way a little from its original community ethos. I feel it is important to gauge the opinions of, and engage with, as broad a spectrum as is possible when we are holding the fort of something so dear to the hearts of thousands of people. We cannot please 100% of the people 100% of the time, but we can certainly try our utmost to do so and, if given the opportunity, this is something I am going to try.

My academic background is in sports journalism which included work placements with both of the local newspapers covering the club, and I have also spent three full seasons serving as the Media Officer of a semi-professional football club in Flintshire - this meant I was acting as press liaison, programme editor and website content editor. Whilst I am not going to tie my roots to the media team who, on the whole and under the stewardship of Neil Bellis, are doing a sterling job, I am willing to impart my background knowledge gained from my previous experience - coupled with recognising why some of our supporters are disillusioned at the moment, into as many areas as I can.

Some of you may know me from a short stint serving on the board of the former Chester City Supporters Trust in the mid-2000's where, alongside my fellow Trust board members and amongst other activities, I played an integral part in organising the publication and distribution of a fanzine ("On The Burgerline") and organising a fundraising walk to an away match at Shrewsbury Town FC. I

would like the opportunity to draw on those experiences of playing a significant role in mobilising the fan base and I would like to do so on a much grander scale now.

As a co-operative, supporter-owned football club I truly believe that the custodians must question everything that they do when running the club, and do so in the best interests of the club as a whole, because they will be questioned all the time by the people they answer to - the supporters. They must truly be accountable to not only the members who have elected them onto the Board, but to the fan base as a whole.

As I touched on earlier, I do share the views of those who believe the club has not done enough to engage with the fan base, to listen to the fan base, to answer to the fan base, and I do hold my own views that we have somewhat lost sight of the original ethos of forming a club "by the fans, for the fans." I recently saw one critical social media post to which said "Our City, No Community, Their Club." Whilst the Community Trust are operating fantastically with what they are doing, it was felt that the club as a whole was becoming further distant from its original ethos on formation over five years ago.

Then I met the current Board prior to the latest City Fans United members meeting and it struck me that, quite simply, the sheer workload these six fellow supporters are taking on means they are having far too much to do. Sometimes we forget that running a football club, especially at the level of the pyramid we find ourselves, is a heavily demanding, time-consuming role. Whilst I do not profess to have experience in the likes of business, planning or project management, what I do have is an extra pair of hands needed and a set of core beliefs of how a community-focused, supporter-owned club should operate. Whilst I cannot commend enough the Board members past and present for getting us to where we are now, and whilst I do feel it is important to always develop the club, I also feel we should never lose sight of why we started and what a fantastic opportunity we gave ourselves to do things differently.

Going back to my introduction and summarising my decision to stand for election, my family may joke that I have begun an early mid-life crisis but I will reply that I am finally acting after, admittedly, moaning and criticising from the sideline in the past. I hope others are planning to do the same because we all have the power within the constitution to make things happen and I know the current Board would welcome as many extra bodies as possible alongside them. I know that I share the beliefs, views and opinions as others about what changes I feel need to be made, what kind of help the current custodians of our club need and how best to direct our great football club on its journey. All I ask for is, if I am unsuccessful in getting an opportunity to impart my ideas, I trust you will elect a similar-minded person who is willing to listen and be accountable to our supporters, to impart them for us.

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Jonny Hughes



Nominated by Andrew Cummins and David Morris

You may not know me but you'll be familiar with my work (it pops in your inbox fortnightly).

But first, a bit of background.

Supporting Chester wasn't my choice. The blame for that lies squarely with my dad many years before I was even born and a family that can trace its roots of supporting the greatest club in the world back many years (one member though, who shall remain nameless, quite fancies the 'other' local team – we're researching ways to rectify this).

My career is in marketing and I have had a full and immersive experience across the whole of the marketing mix. It's my passion and plays to all of my strengths. But it isn't my only passion.

My other is quite obviously Chester FC. My dad was right: I love this club. Like all of you it runs in my blood and I'm proud of where we've come from and excited about where we're going.

From behind the scenes I have been volunteering at the club in a marketing capacity. I created and brought back the CFU newsletter with Neil Bellis, created and designed the season ticket brochure and helped roll it out with the media team. I have also explored the feasibility of local businesses providing discounts to CFU members by cold calling on businesses in the city and asking them if they would support the CFU in this way – most jumped at the idea!

I have also, through arranging meetings with FLi, got to grips with the nuts and bolts of our website and put the club into a position where it now knows where it stands.

I believe in creativity, openness, pushing boundaries and straight talking.

Here's also what I know for sure: If you do what you always did then you'll always get what you always got. A very clever man taught me that once, and through my career to date he has been absolutely spot on. So in the spirit of straight talking here are some things I believe:

- 1. Communication needs improving.** The club has made some great strides in this area, yet there is a long way to go. But communication isn't just about meetings. We need technical support too. We're volunteer run so we need software that supports the way the club is structured. As a volunteer-run club, with many at work during the day, we cannot rely on emails and voicemail alone. It makes sense to me that the club should investigate solutions such as cloud based CRM systems and project management tools. One place where all information is relayed and can be assigned to those responsible, all in real-time and apple/android friendly. This will also support our commercial aims.
- 2. Smart marketing.** We need to up our game: Full stop. From the match day experience to our social media strategy, from increasing attendances to increasing website visits, from attracting new CFU members to re-engaging with lost fans; these aren't disparate elements, they're the whole, and how well we execute on each and every one of them will determine our fortunes. I believe we need to be more proactive instead of reactive. We have a great commercial team, they need more support. To give a specific example, we need a corporate website to showcase our hospitality offering, and we need it now. We can't wait. Our competitors are already ranking high on google, drawing positive reviews on social media, generating inbound enquiries. We need to be up there too.
- 3. Embrace the new, be different.** We are living in a lucky age. There is so much opportunity out there, and there are tools out there to help us capitalise and win. For instance, for the newsletters I use mailchimp. To date it hasn't cost the club a penny, but has given back so much more in return. It has opened a communication channel. It has opened up a sales channel. It has told me that roughly 20% of all those who open our newsletters do so abroad, with the majority being in America. Data like this is invaluable. Our google analytics data is invaluable too. But data on its own is useless unless you implement it in a smart way. Let it show us what isn't working and streamline our efforts and energies into things that do. We need to investigate online ticketing, podcasts, other live streaming opportunities such as Periscope and put the kind of YouTube content up there that fans crave. This is 2015; we have to embrace a new way of doing things: To me it's not a choice, it's a necessity.

These aren't just empty words. This is my passion. I know what we need to do. But I won't be able to do it alone. Our great strength is our volunteers and we already have some great ones, but I believe we need more. We need people with the skills and energies to implement all I have talked about. We need experience, youth and intelligence to help move this club forward.

My broad shoulders are well up for the challenge. I hope you back me.

COYB.

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Gerry Cummins



Nominated by Tracey Smith and Dan Burns

As a passionate supporter of football in the community, I regard the opportunity to join the team of directors at Chester FC as a great privilege.

I believe passionately in football not only as a competitive sport but also as a significant contributor to the wellbeing of the local and wider community. I hope and believe that my personal attributes and my life experience mean that I can add a great deal to the skills and capabilities of the leadership and management team at the club.

I am an experienced local business person and have significant knowledge and skills in the financial services sector which I believe I could use to the benefit of the club.

I have a very broad range of experience in the business and the wider community. Having qualified as a chef and working at a number of leading hotels including the Mollington Banastre in Chester between 1986 and 1988, I took a change in career direction as a result of my father's success in the financial services industry, following him into that industry. I started a career with the Prudential Assurance Company in Chester. I worked there for 12 years and, when Prudential in the UK decided to discontinue with a field sales team I started my own successful Independent Financial Services business, based near to Chester, which has gone from strength to strength since its inception in February 2002.

In terms of my personal attributes, I am a family man, married with two young daughters. My daughters attend Queens School Chester and Upton Hall Convent School.

Although born in Birmingham in the late 60s, I am an adopted Cestrian, having lived in the northwest for almost 30 years since 1986.

I am involved in supporting my local Catholic church community.

I am also a supporter of the John Hartson Foundation cancer charity I have done their Ben Nevis event on two occasions and raised circa £1500 on each occasion.

I have also attended the two Charity Balls that the John Hartson Foundation has held in Glasgow.

I now live in Lavister and regularly attend and support Chester FC including often sponsoring, through my business two first team players Tom Shaw and Luke George.

On a number of occasions for Chester games I have booked tables for 10 in the Legends lounge for the pre match meal and match tickets.

I am a passionate football fan, I love and care for the game of football. Although an Aston Villa fan by birth (my father supported them and I followed in his footsteps) I was introduced to Chester FC by a friend a few years ago and have been attending Chester FC games on a regular basis ever since as I love to get to Chester games whenever I can. I feel I have formed a bond with Chester FC and some members of staff/volunteers. Also I feel that there is a massive discrepancy in terms of the financial support for Premier League clubs and lower league/non league clubs, so I feel it is important for me to provide as much support to Chester FC as I can. I also like the more personal feeling involved with supporting a non Premier League club there seems to be more interaction with the players and management. I have encouraged some of my friends, neighbours and business associates to come and watch Chester FC with me and some have actually come to Chester FC games and they have thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

I also like the work Chester FC does in the community with schools and providing soccer classes for children in school holidays. My youngest daughter has started to attend football for girls on Friday evening in Chester.

I have a number of friends and customers who are Chester FC fans.

I have recently become a member of the Chester FC fundraising committee and am looking forward to help raise funds for Chester FC.

I firmly believe that I can add not only the personal attributes of passion, commitment and integrity but also very strong business acumen and attributes, in particular with the benefit of my significant financial services experience but also my experience in running a successful and thriving business which is well known and reputed through the area.

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Anne Salmon



Nominated by Mark Salmon and Geoff Leith

For those of you who don't know me I am, first and foremost a career woman and mother who is married to Mark, a lifelong Chester FC supporter. I never had any particular affiliation to a football club previously, but I attended home games a while back for a couple of seasons and actively support as many of the fundraising events for Chester as I can.

Almost a year ago now, I volunteered here full time for 6 weeks covering Tracey's Operational Manager's role and gained some real insights into the club as well as meeting a lot of wonderful people. Since then, I have been looking for a way to continue in a voluntary capacity whilst using my skills and experience to make a difference.

I was employed by Royal Mail for over 25 years, working my way up to Operational Manager in charge of the distribution function where I managed a budget of over £4.5m, ensured operational and legal compliance regulations were adhered to, submitted business plans designed to meet financial targets and dealt with all the day-to-day issues and challenges as they arose.

I studied for and obtained my haulage Operator's License (passing first time) – so I can now run my own Heavy Goods fleet and I also passed, with Distinction, my Event Management Diploma meaning I am not only at ease in a hi-vis jacket and safety shoes, I can also slip on a dress and heels and set up my own corporate event planning business.

Since April this year I have worked at Bristol-Myers Squibb in Chester as part of the HR team. I provide administrative support for 8 managers and take responsibility for organising all the major activities that we're required to participate in. Examples include on-site training sessions for visiting HR Managers from EMEA (Europe, Middle East and Africa), regular visits from our Business Partners in the US and a week-long Customer Service Appreciation event where we looked at what "great customer service" meant to us and how we could live and breathe this on a daily basis.

When I am not working, I am Vice President of Soroptimist International Ellesmere Port, a women's organisation that seeks to enable, empower and educate women and young people so that they can reach their full potential. We support local charitable initiatives such as the West Cheshire food bank and local refuges for the homeless as well as foreign ones such as Mary's Meals which aims to provide chronically hungry children with one meal every school day, encouraging education that can lift them out of poverty in later life.

So, what does all this mean for Chester FC?

To me, Chester FC is a business whose final product or output is playing football; therefore all the normal business processes apply. The club has come a long way since the early days after it was re-formed and that is all credit to everyone involved but it can't stand still or rest on its laurels. I want to join others in helping this club to reach its full potential and be successful.

In order for Steve Burr and his boys to succeed on the pitch, they need a lot of background work and support and this is where I can help.

- I will bring to the table not only a female perspective but different life experiences to complement those of the other Directors.
- I am energetic and enthusiastic.
- I am that one person who will ask "why?" who wants to cut through the waffle and emerge from meetings with a clear cut plan of action.
- I believe in responsibility and accountability; I have always been transparent and honest in my dealings with others and I expect them to reciprocate.
- I believe that the key to success lies in solid team work, working together for a common goal where people help and support each other.

Chester FC's motto is "our city, our community, our club"; I am a Stockport girl by birth but this area is my adopted home, it's where I work and where my friends and family live. I want to help make this club a force to be reckoned with, one the fans are proud to support not only because of the results on the pitch, but because of other things as well – inclusion, diversity, excellent community spirit and a place where everyone is part of a large family who, when they pull together, can achieve really great things.

If you believe that I can help this club achieve its true potential, then please vote for me.

Thank you.

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Laurence Kirby



Nominated by Barrie Hipkiss and Barbara Rogers

I was born in Chester and have lived here all my life. I have been a supporter home and away for more than 50 years. Many of you will know me as a volunteer who served as Financial Controller of the Club from December 2012 until late last year. This was not a board position, but I reported to the board on all financial matters.

I am a Chartered Accountant (FCCA) with a wide range of experience in the corporate and business world. I have served as a director with more than twenty companies of various sizes and in a variety of business sectors. Throughout the past 20 years I have operated as Group Finance Director of Plexus Cotton Limited, one of the North-West's most successful private companies with its head office in Liverpool. I am recently retired and will be able to commit adequate time to the role of director.

During my time as Financial Controller of the Club I introduced a wide range of system improvements and controls and put together a team of experienced staff who ensured that the Club's finances were kept in good order. Despite three championships in successive seasons, the Club was in a precarious position at the end of the 2012-2013 financial year, having reported a substantial loss. But we survived and good progress has been made over the last two years. We were profitable in 2013-2014 thanks largely to the transfer of Antoni Sarcevic. In 2014-2015 we will have reported another profitable year on the back of a successful run in the FA Cup.

The overriding mandate to the board from the members is to create a financially sustainable Club that is run for the long-term interest of the community. I am very aware of the inherent financial uncertainty that comes with being a football club and the difficulty faced in predicting income streams. Most of our income comes into the business in the early part of the season but is spent at a greater rate in the second half. Our income is also heavily dependent on success or failure in the Cup competitions and any transfer activity. Money becomes very tight very quickly if we exit the Cups early but much more is possible even with a small Cup run. Managing these uncertainties is a challenge given the understandable pressure to invest as much as possible in the playing squad. It is

therefore essential to our long-term viability that we exercise strict financial responsibility and create and maintain reserves sufficient to fall back on when we are faced with the inevitable knocks and setbacks that will come our way.

At the same time we must invest in developing young players. We must also grow as a business off the field if we are to progress further up the football pyramid.

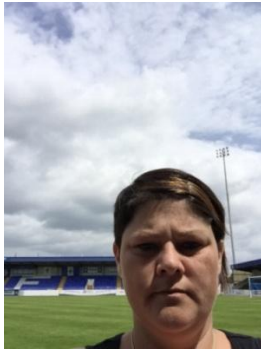
My commitment to you if successful is to use my experience and skills to work with the board to ensure that we operate with financial responsibility across all areas of the Club and to continue to build sustainability into our business model.

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Amy Davies



Nominated by Brian Burns and Andrew Cummins

My name is Amy Davies, I am in a relationship with Nick and we live together in Vicars Cross. I am 35 years old and I have been a Steward at Chester FC for 5 Seasons. You will recognise me better in my big yellow coat as I am currently the Supervisor for the main East stand at the Lookers Vauxhall stadium.

I have been a football fan all my life; however my passion for football started with my dad, who is a huge Manchester United fan taking me to home games from the age of 5. We went to home games at Old Trafford as the company he worked for had a corporate box. We stopped going to the games 8 years ago once he retired. From that time I missed the live match day atmosphere and so I asked to join Chester FC as a steward. From the first day I joined the club I was welcomed by staff, fans and board directors as a whole and I have built my passion for our community club.

I graduated University with BSc Hons Information Systems in 2001 (Business Management and IT) and have used my knowledge and skills gained from this throughout my career and to help out at Chester FC. I also hold diplomas in Life Coaching and NLP; these enable me to be a great leader and man manager. I have completed NVQ 2 in Crowd safety and am working towards my NVQ 3 Supervisor in crowd safety; this will be completed this year.

My career since graduating University has spanned across the globe in Recruitment, Business Development and Management. I took a year out following completing my degree and travelled Australia and Asia.

I began my career and spent 8 years in International Medical Recruitment, I managed country offices across Europe, and we had offices in Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary, Greece, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Germany and Portugal. I managed our candidate resourcing strategies to include conducting talks to medical graduates at universities across Europe, I arranged recruitment events for clients

such as Lloyds Pharmacy and the NHS and also managed our staff recruitment and budgets for each of my offices overseas.

Following my time with this company I joined a multinational company, Medacs, I was recruited to move to Australia and open their operations in Sydney. I set up and developed their Doctor Recruitment division, spending 9 months out there before returning home and moving my career into the automotive industry.

My role in Recruitment has required public speaking, sales, customer service and also negotiating skills on a daily basis all of which I would be able to transfer into my role with the club and help them to develop. I currently run my own business in Automotive Recruitment and so am able to devote the time needed to the club alongside my already successful business.

During my time as a steward at Chester FC I have been able to develop excellent relationships, respect and loyalty from not only my team of stewards but also the fans and staff of the club. I always treat others the way I would like to be treated and go the extra mile for my fans to ensure they have a great time each and every time they attend the ground. I am responsible not only for their safety but also their enjoyment. I am passionate not only about my club but also my staff and the club as a whole and this drives me to improve myself constantly.

I continue to support the club safety officer at the club by helping with the recruitment of new stewards, last season I met with the career department at Chester University to develop an advert that would be sent out to their students informing them of the need for stewards and from this campaign we have successfully added and trained 8 new stewards. I am the main contact and continually support them and arrange those attending games.

During the closed season 2015 I joined the Maintenance group at the club and assisted with the re-painting of the safety steps in the ground. This proved to be a massive job but with an excellent team we overcame obstacles and managed to achieve them being sand blasted and re painted in time for the new season.

Having spent time speaking with directors and other employees of the club I have researched exactly what the role entails and with my skills, dedication, loyalty and desire to develop our club I feel that I have a lot to contribute.

During my time at the club I have stewarded in different stands and have built excellent relationships with a large number of fans, through my love for the job and our fans I have built, not only their respect but also great friendships. As I am on the ground with the fans each and every match I am able to listen to and understand how we can pull together to improve and drive the club forward.

City Fans United / Chester FC – Board appointments – AGM 2015

Candidate Manifesto

The order of the candidates has been selected at random by the independent scrutineer

Mike Griffiths



Nominated by Jim Casey and Dan Cartwright

I am deciding to stand for election for the board of Chester FC. My election promises will be few and simple, I hope you agree with me in regards to what needs to be done to allow the club to grow and you vote for me, I only want the best for Chester FC and I believe my ideas will benefit the club.

I feel we have lost touch somewhat with the community ethos and family club feel we had when we first reformed. I have felt for a number of years that the club has had no long term strategy for growing the club and growing attendances, and the only plan we have had is that people will come to watch a winning team. If we do not change then I am afraid of what the future holds, as I feel crowds will not grow, and we will be stuck in the National league, or lower, in front of no more than two thousand home fans for the foreseeable future. Apart from the pitch covers and the extension to the club shop and outside area of the blues bar, there has been no tangible investment in the infrastructure of the club, and little effort to grow attendances in a sustainable way. I want this to improve.

I shall outline the projects and ideas I want the club to undertake and if elected I will put in front of the board to vote on. I am happy to run all my ideas as project leader, with only board approval needed, or alternatively I am happy to work in a collective effort with any/all current board members, paid staff and/or volunteers.

1. Improvements in communications to fans is vital. To improve communications with the current membership I would like to push through the official CFU forum in the form we have been told about for many months, with posters using their real names and getting official replies. I would be happy to create, administer and maintain the forum on behalf on the board.

2. To improve the match day experience by running a project to explore the possibility of building bottle bar facilities in the gaps near the turnstiles, so people can get a drink before the game and at half time whilst in the ground, hopefully enhancing enjoyment and increasing revenue, as well as taking the pressure off the blues bar, which as we all know can get ridiculously busy. I have already tentatively talked to friends in the trade who have given me ideas of what is needed and how much it will be roughly. From this I believe it would be a much cheaper and better alternative to extending the blues bar. I would like to fund raise for this myself, and try to attract sponsorships for the cost.
3. To improve the match day experience by finding solutions to the amount of time it takes to get away from the ground. I feel a link via the footbridge to Saltney, with a car park on the other side would achieve this, and would very much like the opportunity to cost this project out. Maybe the club could look at putting on a shuttle service of some sort to allow for the people who could not walk the required distance, however either way it would reduce the amount of traffic leaving the ground and improve the time getting away.
4. We need as a club to organically grow the attendances, which have been falling alarmingly for the last four years. We used to nearly fill the south stand with free tickets for kids, with their adult companions being asked for a five pounds contribution. I propose we do this again, give away a lot of free tickets to school aged children in the surrounding areas, as well as junior football clubs and other organisations. I don't mean the 20-50 we currently do, but hundreds of tickets, it is the only way to hook people into Chester FC, by doing it at an early age. I would like this project to be run in a very similar way it was run during the first season after reform, but with even more follow up after the match. I think registering email addresses of parents to follow up with offers will see a continuation.

I would also like to think I would be very approachable and as already mentioned think communications need serious improvement. I would love to make my contact details available for all fans, whether member or not, so they can talk to me about ideas to grow the club and problems they might have with the club. Whilst the CFU survey is useful to a degree, if we want to grow the club I would also like to get out there and talk to fans who have decided to stop coming over the last few years and try to discover what we as a club can do to entice them to return. I also want regular chats with all the paid staff and volunteers at the club. I believe no one knows what needs doing more than the people who have to do it, and there could be a goldmine of ideas there that the club is simply ignoring currently.

Thanks for reading,

City Fans United / Chester FC – Board appointments – AGM 2015

Candidate Manifesto

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Simon Olorenshaw



Nominated by Geoff Leith and Bethan Lee

Along with my wife I am a season ticket holder in the East Stand and an active member of CFU, attending all meetings and supporting initiatives where possible. I was part of the working party that investigated and developed the two board structure in 2013 and was co-opted onto the current Board in April of this year.

I am currently employed as the Head of Asset Management at Merseyrail where I have the responsibility for a variety of services ranging from property, through programme management, IT and legal & compliance. I therefore believe that I can use some of these skills to great effect at Chester FC as we develop our future strategy.

If I were to be elected I would support the development of an organisation that is fit for the future, not just on the playing side but also a support organisation that is in place and ready for the challenges that the push to the Football League will bring.

Whilst there is an acceptance that we have to work within the constraints of the fan's owned model, there must also be an acknowledgement of the strengths and benefits that this provides. We must recognise the work that has been done over the previous years and build on this for the future to ensure the foundations are there, not only for the first team but also all of the teams within the academy and provide support to the Community Trust where appropriate.

Working in close co-operation with all groups within the club, from Junior Blues, our paid staff, our band of willing and able volunteers, Inclusive Blues, the coaching staff, the CFU membership and the Senior Blues and our Former Players Association I want to ensure that we develop a strategy that everyone is a part of, and delivers what it promises, with no compromises.

It is important to ensure that all involved in the running of the club are clear on their responsibilities and accountabilities and that everyone is aligned, and fully understand, the goals that we are aiming to achieve.

I would also support the Board in its aspirations for the engagement of all fans, even those who do not realise that they are fans yet, to ensure that the CFU membership increases on an annual basis,

and that we have robust processes in place to guarantee effective communication across the myriad of social and formal platforms.

I would ask that you consider my proposals above, recognise the skill-set that I can bring to the current Board and support my nomination with your vote at the forthcoming AGM.