



THE  
**HAMLETTER**  
**The Official  
Newsletter of Dulwich  
Hamlet Supporters' Trust**  
ISSUE 13, April 2008

**CHAIR'S MESSAGE –  
EDDIE MURASZKO**

Since the last newsletter, it seemed that the season was drawing to a relatively quiet close, with an average run of form seeing the team apparently slip out of the play-off places, but looking in good shape for next year as long as Craig Edwards can keep the squad together over the summer.

Then in mid-March, the owner of the club, Nick McCormack, announced that he would welcome approaches to run the club. The same announcement was made in respect of our co-tenants, Fisher.

Clearly an era of relative stability appears to be coming to a close, and we are once again facing uncertain times. Additionally the lease on Champion Hill has less than four years to run, so the need to get that sorted out is becoming critical.

The Trust was founded to be able to represent supporters and act on their behalf in the face of exactly this sort of scenario. These issues are explored in more depth elsewhere in this edition. So far, we have issued a press release, which got excellent coverage in the Southwark News, and written to the club to try once again to open channels of communication with the owner. We eagerly await the club's response.

In the meantime I would urge those who have yet to do so to re-join the Trust to help make us as representative of the supporter base of Dulwich Hamlet as possible.

We'll keep you posted on developments,

Eddie

**MEMBERSHIP  
2008 - 2010 for £10**

*Many thanks to those members who have already renewed their membership. If you haven't already done so, please remember that the £10 membership will on this occasion last for two years.*

*It has been encouraging to note that lapsed members and new members have also been signing up to join the Trust at this critical time. It is vital that the Trust has as wide a membership as possible, so that the views of the fan base can be properly represented.*

*It is by being united and as representative as possible that we will make progress - as we did when successfully campaigning for the designation of Champion Hill as Other Open Space.*

*Therefore please sign up if you haven't done so, and also encourage others to do so. Further Membership forms are on the web-site and should be returned to the PO Box address below.*

*Lee Shailer, Secretary*

**AGM & ELECTIONS 2008**

PLEASE SEE PAGE 3 FOR DETAILS. THE AGM IS SCHEDULED FOR:

**THURSDAY 5<sup>th</sup> JUNE AT THE GROUND**  
(UNLESS ADVISED OTHERWISE)

**DHST CONTACT DETAILS**

Website: [www.dhst.org.uk](http://www.dhst.org.uk)

e-mail : [dhst@btconnect.com](mailto:dhst@btconnect.com)

Postal address: DHST

PO Box 43616,

London SE22 0XA

Phone: 07984 278265

**TRUST SHOP -  
SURPLUS STOCK**

As you will be aware, the club took charge of the shop at their request in the Autumn. The Trust has repeatedly offered its remaining stock to the Club at cost price, but the offer has not been taken up. Therefore we are now offering the remaining stock at the following prices.

- Hang ups.....50p
- Woolly Hats..... £6.00
- Edgar Kail
- T-Shirts (S,M,L, L, XL).....£7.00
- TOFF Shirts (L, XL, XXL).....£32.00
- Kitz Jacket (M, L, XXXL).....£25.00

Pictures of the stock are on the website [www.dhst.org.uk](http://www.dhst.org.uk)

Stock is limited so please hurry. Please send details and cheques (made payable to 'Dulwich Hamlet Supporters Trust') to the PO Box address shown on the front page. Please add Postage and packing costs of 50p for each item less than £10 and £2.50 for each item greater than £10. Alternatively, speak to a member of the Board on match days.

Adam Shahin, Treasurer

**SOUTHWARK NEWS ARTICLE  
AND THE FUTURE OF DULWICH HAMLET**

Although many supporters will be aware of the statements made by owners of Fisher and Dulwich Hamlet, it is important that everyone is as well informed as possible about what has been said so far.

Therefore on the following pages the following is set out:

- the text of the Southwark News article on 20<sup>th</sup> March;
- the press release issued by DHST which was reproduced in the Southwark News on 27<sup>th</sup> March;
- the text of a letter sent from DHST to Nick McCormack on 18<sup>th</sup> March (before the story broke) seeking a meeting to discuss how the Trust and Club could work together
- the text of a letter sent from DHST to Nick McCormack on 26<sup>th</sup> March seeking a meeting to discuss the 'approach' from the Trust that he said would be welcome.

These documents (in particular the Press Release) represent the current position and we will continue to keep members updated. Note finally that we have also written to 100 Club members about the issue and assuring them that no commitment will be made about the money without consulting them first.

**NEW DHST BOARD MEMBER**

Andy Tucker was formally co-opted onto the Board of DHST on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2008.

Andy was a Board member early on in the Trust's existence and has re-joined to strengthen the Board during this time of potential uncertainty.

**CLUB CANCELS FOOTBALL COMMITTEE  
REPRESENTATION**

In late February, the club owner, Nick McCormack, informed Mick O'Shaughnessy, the supporter - elected representative on the Club Football Committee, that he was no longer prepared to recognise DHST representation on that Committee.

Mick was invited to remain on the Committee in a personal capacity, but decided instead to resign.

We will seek to establish a relationship with the club that will hopefully restore the position.

## Annual General Meeting and Procedure for Nominations

DHST's Annual General Meeting (AGM) will take place on **Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2007 at 7.30pm** at the club (unless advised otherwise). At the AGM the results of the elections will be announced. DHST will elect a board of up to nine people to run the Trust for the next year. Once elected, the board will have the power to co-opt three further members to ensure there is effective representation for various community groups and DHST has the skills and experience it needs to operate effectively.

### **Who can stand for election?**

Any paid up member of DHST as long as he/she:

- *is over 18*
- *has not been declared bankrupt*
- *is not subject to a disqualification order under the Company Directors Disqualification Act*
- *has not been convicted of an indictable offence (other than a spent conviction as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974)*
- *is willing to abide by any rules for the conduct of the election.*

The board will need people with a range of skills and backgrounds who support the aims of DHST. No previous experience is necessary. The work will be unpaid, but rewarding, as it will hopefully ensure the survival and well-being of the football club that we all support.

### **How do I stand for election?**

To stand you will need to complete the "Nomination Form" overleaf and be supported by 2 other members of DHST. (Any member can support the nomination of up to nine candidates.) You will also be required to write a personal statement of no more than 300 words in support of your candidature; this statement will then be issued with the ballot papers.

### **Who can vote?**

All paid up members 16 and over. The trust is a democratic organisation and every member has one vote irrespective of how much they have contributed to the Trust.

**Please use your vote.**

### **The Process**

- Thursday 24th April - closing date for completed nomination papers to be returned to DHST's registered office (DHST (elections), 4 Woodridge Close, Bracknell, Berks, RG12 9QX).
- Thursday 1st May - Ballot papers with written statements and AGM invitations posted.
- Thursday 22nd May - Deadline for ballot papers to be returned to the registered office.
- Thursday 29th May – Finish counting ballot papers
- Thursday 5th June - AGM itself

### **Further information**

More details of the board member policy and constitution are available from [www.dhst.org.uk](http://www.dhst.org.uk)

## Text of Southwark News articles - 20/3/08

### 1) "FANCY RUNNING A FOOTBALL CLUB? FISHER AND HAMLET PUT AN OFFER ON THE TABLE"

Owners make extraordinary appeal for investors into local sides

Both of Southwark's historic non league clubs could soon be changing hands, after their current owners made public an extraordinary offer for potential new investors.

Dulwich Hamlet-based at the foot of dog Kennel Hill- and Fisher Athletic- originally from Salter road in Rotherhithe but currently ground sharing in Dulwich- are owned by local businessmen Nick McCormack and Eren Muduroglu respectively.

However both owners are tiring of the day to day responsibilities of running the clubs and are eager to welcome new blood through the door. In an attempt to solidify the future for the clubs, both owners have vowed to continue their financial support, whilst allowing new faces to come in and run the business.

Speaking exclusively to the 'News'- on behalf of his brother Eren, now largely resident in Turin, Italy- former chairman Sami Muduroglu said: "Fisher costs us a hell of a lot of money at the moment and we're not competent in the infrastructure at all. All we're doing is literally throwing more and more at it to have a go. If somebody wants to take Fisher tomorrow-it's with our blessing. You can't commit expenditure to the tune of probably £1m a year to Fisher Athletic and get nothing back. Our business isn't running the football club and it never has been. When you add in all the salaries we've got to pay, you're at budgetary levels that require someone to sit and look at it and say things like- 'where can I get £50k of sponsorship?' and 'we're the most senior club in Southwark, where can I sell some boards? Where can I get corporate entertainment going?' That type of thing- someone who actually wants to make it work where the costs are offset. It would be foolish to say, just out of love, we're going to pump-even if it's just £500k a year- £12.5m into Fisher Athletic over the next 25 years."

Mr. Muduroglu says his family- who collectively have run Fisher for many years- would be willing to provide a significant sponsorship to both clubs, but would actively welcome anybody who wanted to run the club-and would make nothing off limits to them.

Addressing long standing rumours of a merger between the two sides, he said: "Personally, I'm against it- but if one person came in and took Fisher and one person came in and took Dulwich and they spoke to each other, there's nothing I could do about it."

The move opens up a number of interesting possibilities for the future of both clubs. There has long been talk of a fan orchestrated buyout at Dulwich Hamlet, with the club's supporters' trust holding a sizeable war chest they are still hoping to invest in shares.

The future for Fisher is less clear. As the 'News' reported last week, it is set to be at least a year before they know the outcome of proposals to build a state of the art new stadium in Southwark Park. With the club currently still holding a commitment to redevelop their former stadium on Salter Road (before constructing the apartments they also have permission for), the location for home matches over the next five years or so is still up in the air.

Despite this desire to move on Mr. Muduroglu certainly has a view on this, decrying any potential short term move back to Rotherhithe: "Our obligation at the moment is to build a million pound stadium [at Salter Road] before we deliver the flats", he said. "Well, a million pound stadium there would almost be a lego kit. It would be worth nothing and everything could probably be disposed of there for probably half a million pound afterwards."

He continued to pose a number of rhetorical questions, asking: "What do we do with Fisher? Do we go back to [Salter Road] in two years' time for three years knowing we're going on? Do we stay at Dulwich because it gives Fisher the security of tenure and it gives Dulwich a certain security? In my opinion, the best thing for Dulwich is Fisher staying there."

His comments were backed up by Nick McCormack, the owner of Dulwich Hamlet-who was keen to add a clause of his own: "I agree with what Sami is saying here, but there is a key difference", he revealed. "The changes will obviously affect us at Dulwich but in a much smaller way than they will affect people at Fisher. At the end of the day our priority is our families and it is time for someone else to carry the mantle. I'd absolutely welcome my colleagues at the Dulwich Hamlet Supporters' Trust stepping in to run the football club if they want to try. Having said that, I would anticipate the Dulwich operates on substantially more than what the trust has raised to date."

### 2) "SUPPORTERS WILL NEVER BUY SHARES"

Hamlet owner Nick McCormack has laid down the law to the Dulwich Hamlet Supporters' Trust-saying their ambition of buying shares in their club "is never going to happen".

Despite this, the owner has challenged Hamlet's passionate support base to come forward and pick up the baton of running the club, saying the onus is on them "instead of keeping on criticising".

"I personally think the Dulwich Supporters' Trust is an arms length mission of one or two individuals to be seen in a credible light in the business they work in", he claimed. "The revenue of the 100 Club sit in the Supporters' Trust and they want to buy shares with it. It's just never going to happen! Give the money back now or give it to the club. It's just a crazy world, the Dulwich set up. You get to the point when you look at Dulwich-probably 20, 30, 40 or 50 years ago-when history was being created at Dulwich. It had a very good name and a very strong position within the community. Now it's hanging on to that by its fingernails and it's just not there anymore. It's in a league that's probably the lowest common denominator of anything to get to the level it's playing at. In terms of revenues, it doesn't create the revenues to sustain itself by any means."

The DHST currently has approximately £11,000 in its coffers and is hoping to invest this into the club in exchange for shares in the organisation.

However after Mr. McCormack's offer, it remains to be seen whether the organised group of fans will be willing to take up his challenge of effectively running the club.

## **TEXT OF DHST PRESS RELEASE 27/3/08**

Hamlet fans say "Let's Talk" to Club Owner

The Dulwich Hamlet Supporters' Trust (DHST), reacted to the announcement made by the owner of Dulwich Hamlet Football Club, Nick McCormack in the Southwark News last week regarding the future of the club, by saying that it was keen to meet the club as soon as possible.

Commenting on the article, Eddie Muraszko, Chair of DHST said "I think this has taken fans of both Dulwich Hamlet and Fisher by surprise. The situation had appeared relatively stable; the owners of the clubs had provided some much needed and welcome investment in the facilities at Champion Hill and both clubs are still in with a shout for play-off places in their respective divisions. However, following the owners' comments last week, the future for both clubs appears less certain."

"DHST has always made clear it is not trying to take over the club. Our aim has been to make the club more open, accountable and responsive to supporters and the wider community - in return for which DHST would work in partnership to invest its money in the club, thereby furthering our mutual aims of a successful, growing club with a secure future in SE22. We have not been prepared to simply hand over the money at the club's request without securing shares or possibly some other form of meaningful influence in return - a position overwhelmingly endorsed last year by the members of the 100 club who have raised the money, and one that we feel has been vindicated by this recent news".

"Supporters at Dulwich are keen to better understand what the current position is and what the future holds. There are several key issues which are currently unclear, for example the share ownership of the club, what will happen when the ground lease expires in just three year's time, the terms of the ground-share with Fisher, and the relationship to the Health Club. Until these are better understood and the exact nature of Nick McCormack's offer has been explained, it is difficult to react sensibly."

"As it happens we wrote to the Nick McCormack just before the news broke seeking a meeting, without pre-conditions, to discuss ways in which we could work together going forward to our mutual benefit. We are now writing again, re-iterating our desire to meet in the light of the recent announcement".

"We await a response and will aim to keep supporters informed. In the meantime, I would urge all concerned supporters, whatever their views on the matter, to join the DHST so that the organisation accurately reflects the views of the fans as the situation unfolds. Ideally we would like to have a better idea of the club's plans and any possible options for our involvement by the time of our AGM in June, which we can then discuss. We need as much active participation as possible from supporters as we head towards potentially difficult times for this historic club, about which everyone connected with Dulwich cares so passionately".

## Letter sent from DHST to Nick McCormack on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2008

Dear Nick,

Earlier this season I took over from Philip Mitchell as Chair of the Dulwich Hamlet Supporters' Trust ('the Trust') and with fellow Board members have been looking ways in which the Trust can help the Club and work in partnership with it for mutual benefit. For example, earlier this season we started a new initiative of a promotional campaign to increase attendances at Champion Hill by paying some £350 for local advertising; next year I anticipate this figure will increase to £500.

In addition, the Trust notes with disappointment that you recently decided to cancel the position of a Trust representative on the Football Committee, following which Mick O'Shaughnessy decided to resign his position.

Therefore it would seem timely for the Club and Trust to meet (without pre-conditions) to see if there are areas of common interest where the Club and the Trust can work together to build towards what I am sure are shared objectives of a thriving, successful and well-supported Dulwich Hamlet. One such example could be a joint application for funding from the Football Foundation's capital grants scheme which could raise up to £9,000 for fencing around the ground. Another area could be to discuss ways of widening co-operation on local promotional activity, building on links that we have established with some schools through our Community Days in 2005 and 2007.

Possible attendees at such a meeting could be yourself and Jack Payne, together with myself and Mick. We should be able to be reasonably flexible as to a time and date for such a meeting. If this is of interest please call me on XXXXXX, email me on XXXXXX or write to the above address.

Please note that as a membership-based organisation we would expect to publish this letter on our web-site within the next few weeks.

I really hope that you will recognise the potential value of such a meeting and look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Eddie Muraszko

## Letter sent from DHST to Nick McCormack on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2008

Dear Nick,

I wrote to you on behalf of Dulwich Hamlet Supporters' Trust on 18 March 2008, seeking a meeting, without pre-conditions, to discuss ways in which the Trust and the Club could work in partnership going forward.

Since then we have seen your announcement in the Southwark news of 20<sup>th</sup> March where you were quoted as saying that you would welcome an approach from DHST to become involved in the running of the club.

Clearly DHST is interested to know more about the exact nature of your offer and what your plans are for the future of the club, and therefore would like to repeat our readiness to meet with yourself and other club officials as soon as possible to discuss the situation further.

As you have publicly invited such an approach, either myself or Mick O'Shaughnessy will aim to contact you in due course to arrange such a meeting.

As a matter of courtesy, please note that we will be issuing a press release reacting to the Southwark News article on 27<sup>th</sup> March, in which we will mention that we have responded to your offer by writing this letter. As a membership-based organisation we will intend to publish this letter on our web-site in due course.

I look forward to being able to meet with you in the near future.

Yours sincerely,

Eddie Muraszko