



THE  
**HAMLETTER**  
**The Official**  
**Newsletter of Dulwich Hamlet**  
**Supporters' Trust**  
ISSUE 23, November 2011

**CHAIR'S MESSAGE –**  
**EDDIE MURASZKO**

Welcome to the first Hamletter of the 2011-12 season. May I firstly apologise for the delay in publishing this newsletter. The reason for this is simple - at the start of the season we wrote to the Club proposing that the Trust work with them to re-establish an improved environment for selling Dulwich Hamlet merchandise, and we have waited for the response before communicating with you.

Anyway, I'm really pleased to report that we've now got the go-ahead for our initiative. We have also agreed to be a matchday sponsor later this season and propose to offer the hospitality available to those who renew their membership when that comes up again in January.

It is my sincere hope that these two actions will be the first in a series of positive steps that will re-set the relationship between the Trust and the Club and eventually allow us to invest for the benefit of the club on acceptable terms.

The newsletter contains details of this and also the latest on the development of the club car park and a summary of the report I made as Chair to the June AGM – which sets out how we're doing against our objectives.

Last and by no means least it's been great to see the team make such a winning start, and the healthy rise in attendances. It is against this improved background that I will be doing my utmost to move things forward for the Club, its supporters and the Trust.

Best wishes  
Eddie

**DHST TO INVEST IN**  
**NEW SHOP PREMISES**

In early September, the Trust wrote to the Club with a proposal to invest in setting up new premises for a club shop and to staff the operation on matchdays.

We're pleased to report that in early November they agreed to the idea, so we are now sorting out delivering it.

The shop will sell the merchandise that Bill Azzi currently has to do at the same time as selling the programmes, the proceeds of which obviously go to the club. It has also been agreed that the Trust may use the premises to sell the remainder of the stock that we had left over from when the Club unexpectedly closed the previous Trust shop operation three years ago.

We are currently choosing the most appropriate accommodation and will try to set this up as soon as possible, but delivery lead times may mean it may be a few weeks before we start.

Once we're up and running we may seek to provide a wider range of souvenirs as well as perhaps seeking donations (e.g. of old shirts) for re-sale.

All told we hope that the Trust will once again be playing its part in providing a service to the growing numbers of fans, as well as generating revenue for the Club and clearing some stock from the Trust's accounts. We look forward to getting started and to seeing you there!

## **TRUST TO BE MATCHDAY SPONSOR - YOUR CHANCE TO BE A GUEST OF THE CLUB!**

As part of our initiative to provide and staff new shop premises, the Trust has also agreed to be matchday sponsor for a fixture later in the season.

Although we have yet to confirm our choice with the Club, the match we are likely to choose will be at home to **Whitehawk on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> April** – hopefully a key match with both teams doing well so far this season.

We would like to show our thanks to our members by offering people who join/rejoin the Trust for the next two year membership period starting in January 2012 the chance to be the Club's guests for the day.

Those who express an interest will go into a draw to enjoy the chance of obtaining complimentary tickets and enjoying pre-match/half time and full time Boardroom hospitality.

More details will follow in the next newsletter and when the membership renewal forms go out in the New Year

### **CAR PARK RE-DEVELOPMENT PLANS RE-SUBMITTED**

**In our April 2011 Newsletter, we reported that the application by the owners of the ground to build flats on the club car park had been withdrawn without explanation.**

**In August 2011 a new Planning Application was formally re-submitted. This was essentially the same scheme as before. Thanks to the help and advice of Trust members with experience in this field, the Trust was able to submit a professional and well argued response to the consultation.**

**It set out our qualified support for the proposal whilst also explaining our concerns. The main one of these is that there has apparently been no planning submission or commitment in respect of developing and improving the Greendales site which was to be funded by some of the proceeds from the flat (and subsequently provide an income stream to help make the football club's finances more sustainable). We were also concerned to ensure that the activities of the football club would not be restricted in any way by the development.**

**At the time of writing the Southwark Council website was claiming a target decision date of 10<sup>th</sup> November, but attempts to contact the council for news as to what the steps are have so far been unsuccessful.**

**We'll obviously be monitoring what happens with this extremely closely in the coming weeks and months.**

# DHST Annual General Meeting 16<sup>th</sup> June 2011

DHST's Annual General Meeting (AGM) took place on 16<sup>th</sup> June. As well as agreeing the minutes of the last meeting, reports were taken from the Chair, the Treasurer and the Secretary.

Five people were elected to the Board uncontested, as that is fewer than the maximum number of elected representatives. Those elected are as follows - Eddie Muraszko (Chair), Andrew Tucker (Secretary), Mick O'Shaugnessy, Guy Grater and Tony Squires. Adam Shahin has been co-opted to the Board to continue as Treasurer and David Miles has also been co-opted to the Board. Lee Shailer, who helped found the Trust and had been a Board member since then did not seek re-election and the Board expressed their appreciation for Lee's fabulous efforts (especially on the campaign to secure the future of the ground) over the years.

Below is a summary of the Chair's report, focused on the four objectives the Trust has.

## **1) Overall Summary 2010/11**

- Club has revealed plans for the ground, but progress on these have stalled.
- Trust is cautiously supportive and will await developments from this.
- Trust will continue to seek engagement with the Club
- 100 Club fund continues to grow
- Trust needs to meet the challenges.

## **2) Objective: A thriving Club**

Short term:

Monitoring developments and maintaining involvement on Football Committee.

Long term:

Stable ownership, with healthy and transparent finances.

## **What's happened/ looking ahead**

- What's happened/ looking ahead.
- Plan to change to Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG) seems to have been dropped.
- Hints at February public meeting that Club may look to widen involvement and ownership, but no follow-up.
- Will check to see if there is anything in this.

## **3) Objective: A thriving Trust**

Short term:

Grow 100 Club funds.  
Increase shareholding in Club.  
Membership up to 100.

Long term:

Invest the funds.  
Place on Club Board.  
Membership up to 30% of home gate

## **What's happened/ looking ahead**

- 55 members currently.
- 100 Club membership steady and fund growing by £200 a month.
- Money raised now just under £20,000.
- Small glimmer of movement on shares/ Trust involvement.
- Ideally need to raise profile and find fresh blood for the Board.

## **4) Objectives: Growing Support and Community Links**

Short term:

Promotional activity.  
Gates up to 240 average in 2011/12

Long term:

Gates up to 10% a year from 2009/10.  
Strong and ongoing links with Community.

### **What's happened/ looking ahead:**

- Continued ad and promotional campaign in SE22 magazine. Repeat in 2011/12?
- Also posters in local shops
- Attendances recovered from 181 to 215, helped by price cut (reversed next season).
- Possibility of more volunteers to help with promotional activity/ posters/ free tickets

## DHST AGM 16<sup>th</sup> June 2011 - Continued

### 5) Objectives: A Secure Ground

Short term:

- Monitor & question Club, Kings and Southwark.
- Question club on Fisher ground-share.
- Seek grants for minor ground improvements.

Long term:

- Club have secure freehold/ long term lease.
- Groundshare arrangements clear.
- Greendales run as Community Facility.

### **What's happened/ looking ahead**

- Club revealed advanced plans to build on car park and revamp Greendales and held public meeting.
- Lease position still very unclear.
- Planning Application withdrawn
- Trust enjoyed expert support to submit a professional response that offered qualified support
- Will pursue latest developments with Club to establish what their next steps are.

### 6) Conclusion

- We now know what the owners' plans for the ground, but we don't know why the planning process has stalled.
- The lease is due to end in 2012 and this is still unclear.
- There may be a more conciliatory position from the club as it seeks more help.
- Next 12 months will be crucial to club's future.
- The Trust needs to be in a position to meet these challenges

## 2010-11 Advertising Campaign

**For the third year running, the Supporters' Trust is paying for ads in the local free SE22 magazine which is delivered to 14,000 households locally. This payment also means we get a page to write up the latest news and info about the club and generally raise the profile of the Club in the area.**

**We have also established links with two of the local businesses that sponsor the club (William Rose butchers and Barry Road Barbers) and got their agreement to put up-to-date fixture posters in their windows. We have also been regularly posting fixture details on the local internet forum.**

**This activity seems to be paying off. Following the fall in attendances to just 181 in 2009/10, they recovered well last year to 226 (with growth especially good on Saturdays). Obviously last year's price cut (and late winning run), but the trend has so far continued this year and there do seem to be a number of 'new' fans at the club. The trick will be to get them to remain as regular attendees and we'll be working to do so.**

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### GROUND LEASE RENEWED

**In a recent matchday programme, a message of thanks from Martin Eede included a comment that a five year lease on the ground had been signed. The previous lease had been due to expire in 2012.**

**We have no more details about this, but obviously this is positive news that provides some security of tenure and removes uncertainty at least for a while.**