



NUST Chair Report – AGM 12 January 2026

Ladies and gentlemen. Good evening and thank you for joining us at this year's Newcastle United Supporters Trust AGM.

I was appointed Chair in June 2025, and I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to my predecessor, Paul Karter, and to my fellow board members for their support and hard work over the past year. We all wish Paul the very best for the future and express gratitude for his work while being part of the Trust .

I want to reflect on a highly productive year for the Supporters Trust and showcase the collective achievements that have strengthened our influence and enhanced our collaboration with Newcastle United.

Strengthened Consultation

One of the most significant achievements this year has been the strong relationship we have established with the new CEO, David Hopkinson, including a direct line of communication and regular discussions to address issues that matter to supporters. NUST have made clear to David the importance of transparency for supporters and continue to push for openness on ticketing and wider supporter issues. One of the earliest tangible outcomes of this has been the club's agreement to publish a quarterly report detailing ballot success rates and related information.

We also continue to have formalised meetings with Supporter Services once a month and attend the workshops covering the topics that affect supporter experiences. Alongside this, we have worked in close partnership with the club to build stronger links with the Supporter Liaison Officer and the wider Supporter Services team, providing supporters with a consistent and direct route for raising concerns. This relationship has already made a real difference, helping us represent our members and the wider fan base quickly and effectively.

Influence in Decision-Making

Over the past year, we have been involved in discussions regarding the implementation of a Season Ticket Waiting List, via the Fan Advisory Board. Through our consultations, we've emphasised the importance of having clear and fair criteria including input from the fanbase at the recent workshop.

We raised concerns regarding the potential club crest change requesting that as a recognised heritage asset and vital symbol that unites our city, the consultation process strictly adhered to the FA Guidance.

Fan Advisory Board

There have been changes in the NUST representatives on The Fan Advisory Board (FAB). Adam Stoker stepped down from NUST, and his FAB position was taken over by Karl Williamson. Paul Karter's tenure with NUST will conclude in January 2026, and his FAB seat will also be vacated. To ensure a smooth handover, I attended the FAB meeting in September and will assume Paul's position on the FAB Board from January 2026.

As part of our role on FAB we play an integral role in advising and supporting the club's leadership team across a range of important areas. These include helping to shape the club's vision and

strategic objectives, enhancing the matchday fan experience through both in-person and digital engagement, and providing input on proposals related to the club's heritage assets. Additionally, the FAB contributes to advancing the club's Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) commitments, as well as offering guidance on development plans for St. James' Park. They also support initiatives aimed at growing the club's fanbase both domestically and internationally, improving communications between the club and its supporters, and fostering the club's work within the local community. We are proud to sit alongside the executive Board at NUFC and the members work tirelessly for the benefit of the supporter base.

Community Engagement

Beyond our work with the club, NUST continues to work closely with our nominated charities, NU Foundation, The Bubble Foundation, NUFC Foodbank, The Alan Shearer Foundation and The Sir Bobby Robson Foundation. You can read more on our charity work on our website.

In July 2025 we met with North East Mayor, Kim McGuinness, to explore opportunities to work together with the shared goal of positive change in the North East.

Member Engagement

In 2025, our WhatsApp community has tripled in size, offering important updates and information, as well as a platform for members to discuss these updates with both the Trust Board and each other. We have organised social gatherings for members and also provide a dedicated channel offering support for wellbeing and mental health.

For the Carabao Cup Final, we organised multiple venues in London where members could meet before and after the game, and watch the match if they didn't have a ticket. A total of 3,450 members attended these events, all of which were provided free of charge.

June 2025 saw the NUST annual survey being completed by more than 1600 of our members – our best response to date. From the debate over a new crest, to rising ticket prices, to how younger and older supporters are reacting in different ways, 2025's report was our most in-depth so far. The results were formally shared with the club ensuring your voices continue to be heard. I would like to thank Felicity Thow for her excellent work on the survey and report and also NUST member Will Eddy for his time and assistance with the project.

We continue to support both members and the broader supporter community through social media channels, including Facebook, Instagram, X, Blue Sky, and via email.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Board who work tirelessly to help supporters with a wide range of functionality questions, and to remind our members of ballot dates, away ticket applications and a whole lot more.

Stop Exploiting Loyalty Campaign

NUST worked alongside the Football Supporters' Association (FSA) in the campaign against the exploitation of fan loyalty. Focused on safeguarding the interests of local supporters. NUST has highlighted issues such as increasing ticket prices, and other commercial practices that take advantage of fan commitment. Through grassroots activism, lobbying, and collaborating with the FSA, NUST has successfully raised awareness and pushed for more transparent, fan-friendly policies in football. Their efforts aim to ensure that supporters are treated with respect and their loyalty isn't exploited for profit, championing fairer practices within the sport. We'd like to take this opportunity to not only thank the FSA for leading on this, but the other local supporter groups for embracing this campaign with us throughout 2025.

In March 2025, NUST joined forces with Spirit of Shankly, the Liverpool Supporters' Organisation, to submit a joint letter to Trevor Birch, CEO of the English Football League, raising serious concerns regarding ticket pricing, allocation, and the kick-off time for the Carabao Cup Final. The letter highlighted that, despite the rich histories and loyal fanbases of both clubs, supporters are too often overlooked. We requested; Future finalists to each receive a minimum of 45% of the stadium capacity; A focus on ensuring finals are a reward for genuine supporters rather than a corporate showcase; Collaboration between clubs and governing bodies to reduce ticket costs and set more reasonable kick-off times.

Independent Football Regulator

In August 2025, NUST, together with members of the Fan Advisory Board and the Football Supporters' Association, were pleased to take part in an online meeting with Martyn Henderson, Interim Independent Football Regulator.

The meeting was informal and provided an opportunity for Martyn to outline the key responsibilities of the IFR and how he plans to work with the football pyramid to benefit the game. He also took a number of questions from attendees, and we greatly appreciated the chance to engage with him and hear his insights firsthand. NUST look forward to working with the IFR in the future.

Looking Ahead

While we can take pride in the achievements of the past year, there is always more to be done. As we look towards 2026, we remain committed to representing your views, protecting your interests, and championing the values that make Newcastle United and its supporters so special.

Whether it is advocating for improved fan engagement, fair and affordable ticketing, transparency in the club's governance, or enhancing the matchday experience, our work continues.

In closing, I want to thank each of you for your support and involvement over the past year. None of the progress we've made would have been possible without your passion, dedication, and belief in the power of fan representation. Together, we are building a stronger Newcastle United for generations to come.