



Statement in support of nomination

These are exciting times. For so many years Newcastle United was neglected. As a fanbase, to put it mildly, we were treated with total contempt. But things are very different now. The new(ish) owners seem to genuinely value us, to view us as more than just finance-enhancing customers.

But that does not mean our collective work is done. The relationship between Club and supporters was, under MA, effectively a VHS player. It had just about enough in-tact wiring to keep it working, but it was reliant on history. There were no new releases, no modern updates, not even any working repairs.

And so, we are playing catch up. We are jumping from analogue to digital without any structure in place. And that leap needs careful management.

There are many issues still to tackle. I cannot hope to cover them here, nor would I want to. But let's take ticketing as an example. The Club is taking largely positive steps towards recalibrating how SJP can be accessed (albeit as someone with bags of used stubs at home, I am saddened slightly by the paper ticket's demise!).

There will though, be hiccups and careful thought needs giving to solutions. Ideally, this will be done ahead of time. How will ticket transfer work? How do we ensure mobile signal is not an issue? What about those without smartphones?

And that is all before the Club even looks at away tickets - probably *the* hot topic. How does the Club find a balance between rewarding past loyalty and diversifying the fan base? How can away tickets be allocated 'fairly'? It is going to be an interesting debate.

The key to all of this is engagement, transparency, and communication. I would strive for that if I'm lucky enough to join the Trust's board.

What can I bring to the table? Well, hopefully a few things...

- **Lived experience**

I have had a season ticket in various parts of SJP since 2008/09 and have travelled away a couple of hundred times. I have first-hand knowledge of what works and what needs improving.

- **A background in law**

I am a practicing pensions and finance solicitor (yes, it is a rock and roll as it sounds) so know how legal / board processes work. I spend much of my working time negotiating and trying to find practical solutions.

One thing I've learned is that the desired outcome is so often not prioritised. The detail is important, but getting bogged down in it should not come at the expense of the actual goal. That is an approach I would bring to the Trust.

- **A journalistic background**

I am also a freelance football and cricket journalist. As well as doing a fair amount of fan media, I write for a couple of national publications. That gives me some insight into how that side of football works, as well as the ability to write to, and for, the press.

- **An objective / subjective approach**

I will bring my passion for the Club, combined with a little level-headed reasonableness.

Look, it is easy to write things down but much more difficult to get things done. I promise, as far as I can, the latter.

I also know that there are other brilliant candidates who would also be fantastic additions to the Trust. I'd just like to be part of that. Joining the Trust now is, in my eyes, an opportunity to make a genuine difference.