

# READING MATTER

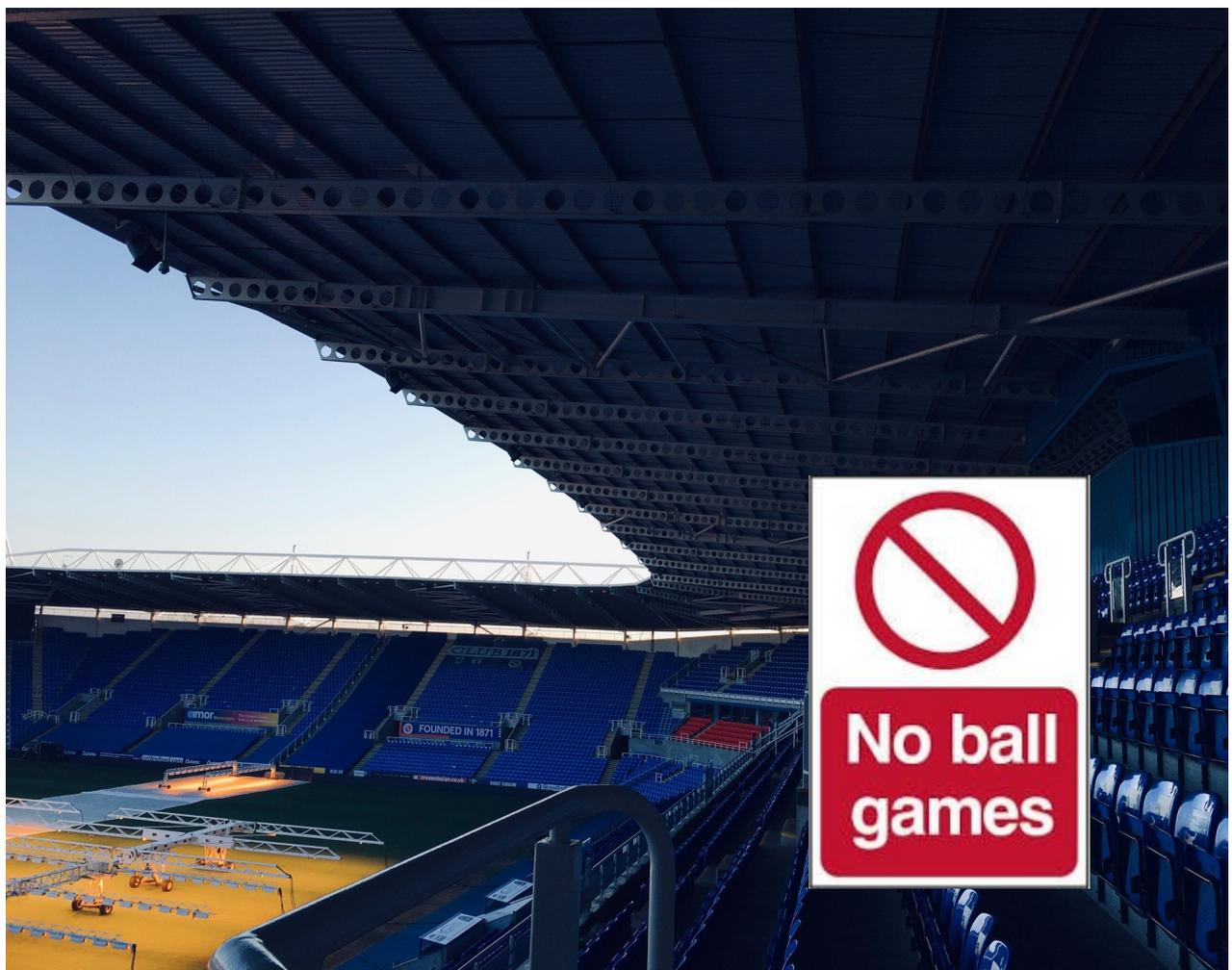
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Free to STAR Members by arrangement



Spring 2020

## 2020 - Covid-19



## Difficult Times

*INSIDE: THE FINANCIAL SITUATION \* CLUB 1871 \* BOARD ELECTIONS \*  
THE FREE TRAVEL OFFER \* AWARD FOR STAR & RFC \* 60 PRONG ATTACK*

# STAR Chairman's Notes



**Welcome to this season's Reading Matter.** What a strange time it is now, no football seemed such a difficult imposition on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March, but now with social isolation in full swing it could be seen as the least of the pieces missing in our lives.

For some football is the primary source of social contact so they are particularly badly hit. If you know someone from football who may be on their own now see if you can make contact by telephone or one of the social media channels.

But the big problem is that we may know a lot of other Reading

supporters but do we know their full name, maybe just a first name or even more likely that guy or girl we always talk to as they sit near us but we have never swapped names.

Once the season starts again (and football will be back ) we should make sure we get to know those people around us just a little better.

**To get to more football related positivity, this season has been another of mixed emotions.**

Jose Gomes was a popular manager with supporters but he didn't seem to have the right effect on the players, as though the football was less negative, it was no more effective.

**Step up Mark Bowen,** who had a mountain to climb with the accusations of sacking Jose and appointing himself. He has turned out to be a straight-talking realist and has made an improvement without (yet) taking

us to the play-off zone and has overcome the initial negativity on his appointment.

The improvement in atmosphere (thank you Club1871 for your positivity that is beginning to raise the rest of the stadium) means that going to games is more enjoyable – and currently going to watch any football would be a result.

Keep safe **Paula Martin**

## Every year we have elections to the STAR Board.

This year there are 7 vacancies. We very much welcome members who have not stood before.

We have changed the nomination process to encourage more people to come forward –see pp10-11.

- It can be done entirely online now
- You need only two members to support you
- Your statement can be as brief as 200 words

## From the Editor

It could be worse. It's been the third season in a row that we've failed to challenge at the top of division, struggled to avoid the drop and changed manager mid-season. Our form was just perking up when football was suddenly suspended on 13 March in a move portrayed as temporary.

Frankly, who knows when we'll see football again at the Madstad. Of the three main suggestions for completing the 2019-20 season – finishing it as the tables stand, re-starting it in the summer or declaring it null and void – the last is marginally the best and has the virtue of precedent. When WWII broke out the 1939-40 season was voided but only three games had been played versus the 37 this season. There are no good answers which is why the football authorities have stayed silent so long, only now (9 April) suggesting finishing 2019-20 behind closed doors is an option.

There is an expectation that a solution will be found and that we can get 'back

to normal' with the 2020-21 season and the delayed Euros to follow. **But will it?** The best exit strategy from Covid-19 depends on the successful implementation of mass-vaccination which could take up to two years – **or taking some calculated risks.** Two metres social distancing and both playing and attending football matches do not sit at all easily together. Even though players are fit and healthy they may well, and justifiably, not fancy the low risk of contracting a virus that can lead to a horrible death. Likewise, and more so, our older supporters.

**So there is a certain logic that suggests we may not get back to 'normal' football until 2021-22.** There could be a gap in the football record only matched by the stoppages caused by the two world wars. This sounds so drastic that it's hard to believe. Can the great modern global football industry really be put



on ice for two years?

**IF** that is, incredibly, the case then football will come back, but it will be different. After each of the world wars, there were changes in league structures and a boom in attendances. In the Championship we could do with a reset. Levels of debt are huge while gates are beginning to fall.

At Reading, despite all the good efforts of the club off the field, we have our own problems: dwindling enthusiasm and erratic player recruitment (see p18). You could say 'well, there's always next season.' There will be – but we just don't know for sure when.

**Roger Titford**

# Structured Dialogue breakthrough

On 24 July 2019 STAR signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Reading Football Club regarding a Structured Dialogue. This all sounds very jargon-y but what it means is that STAR now has the highest level of supporter representation (short of owning the club!) available to English football fans.

Despite the recommendation to hold Structured Dialogue meetings with democratically accountable supporter groups is government-backed, **it is enacted at fewer than ten league clubs as yet.** We expect to be meeting with the club twice a year to discuss high level strategic issues and a summary of these discussions will be published on our website.

The first meeting took place in mid-February 2020 and in a useful ninety minute session we covered the RFC Company structure and accounts. You can read more on this on pages 5 to 7. The discussion encompassed Royal Elm Park, the end of London Irish tenancy and what to do about dwindling crowds.

You can read the meeting notes on our website [www.star-reading.org/news](http://www.star-reading.org/news)

## STAR sponsorships

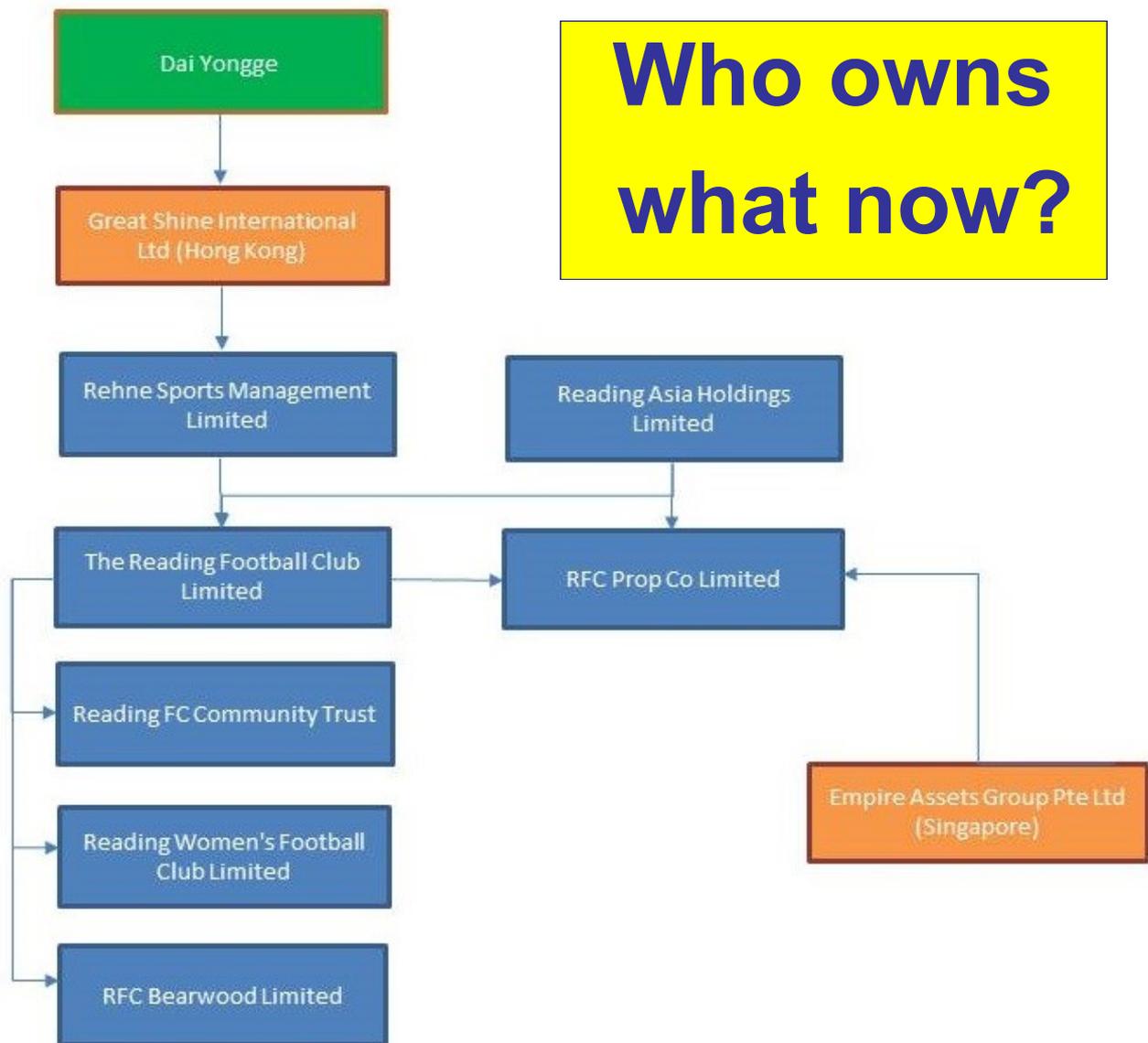
**As a Community Benefit Society** that seeks to promote interest in football locally STAR contributes a significant portion of its annual surplus to three sponsorships.

**The Reading Community Trust** and lately within that the RFC Deaf team.

**Hospital Radio Reading** which broadcasts home match commentaries.

**The Reading & District Sunday League Cup competitions** which means that local Sunday players don't have to pay extra on account of their success.

The STAR Board has agreed to sponsor the RSDL again in 2020-21 which will help cover the expenses for the semi-finals and finals. This sponsorship will also allow the RSDL to lower their competition entry fees for all competing clubs and have a direct benefit to all twelve semi-finalists. Sadly we are not at all sure if and when this season's competitions will conclude.



The structure of the group of companies in which Reading FC sits remains complicated, although probably not as complicated as it was when the Thais were our owners.

An organisation called Rehne Sports Management Limited is the majority shareholder of the club owning more than 95% of the club's shares. Rehne Sports Management Limited is a wholly owned subsidiary of Great Shine International Ltd (Hong Kong), which in turn is owned by Mr Dai Yongge

There is a minority shareholder; Reading Asia Holdings Ltd that owns less than 5% of the club shares. Reading Asia Holdings Ltd is owned by some of the club's previous Thai investors.

The club wholly owns: Reading FC Community Trust, Reading Women's Football Club Limited and RFC Bearwood Limited (which is the company owning and developing the training ground) and the club also partially owns RFC Prop Co Limited, which is the company set up by the Thais to develop Royal Elm Park with a 24.7% shareholding.

The other companies that own shares in RFC Prop Group are Reading Asia Holdings Ltd (the minority shareholder in the club) and Empire Assets Group Pte Ltd (Singapore), which is the majority shareholder. Simple! **Paul Ellix**

# The RFC Accounts 2018-19

**The accounts for the year ending 30 June 2019 have just been published. We set our well-qualified expert to work on taking a view.**

The club has had a very poor year financially making a loss before tax of £30.1m compared to £21m loss in 2018 and £4.7m profit in 2017. Turnover increased by £3.1m to £21m, the difference being mainly a loan fee for Sone Aluko from Beijing Renhe.

There's been quite a lot of financial manouvering on the balance sheet though to accommodate the losses. The club has net financial liabilities of £36.4m, up by less than £2m. To achieve this new shares have been issued to the tune of £28m (on top on nearly £16m in 2018) and an increase in borrowings of £6.5m. Together this covered the cash that was spent through the day to day operations of the club which amounted to £32.5m. Borrowings for the club now amount to £67.8m which is all owed to the shareholder Dai Yongge via the parent company, Renhe Sports Management Limited (more on them later).

The picture is a little different to last season where the stadium was sold for £26.5m, which offset the day to day cash burn. Also last year, new share capital was issued of c£16m which helped to balance the books for the large outflow on players that season (like Aluko, Ilori, Mannone, Barrow, Bacuna, etc). What we do also need to remember is that after these most recent accounts were drawn up we then had a bit of a spending spree in the summer 2019 transfer window, which amounted to £15.2m on players such as Puskas, Joao and, no doubt, some loan fees for the likes of Miazga and Ejaria. A key question is just how wise was that spending spree?

Unsurprisingly the auditors have stated there is a Material Uncertainty relating to the Going Concern of the club. The directors themselves have concluded "based on cash flow projections prepared by management and through confirmation of continuing support from the group's main shareholders and creditors, have a reasonable expectation that the company and the group have adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future".

And meanwhile the club's owners continue to strive for promotion to the Premier League, without jeopardizing the club's financial position.

**From a senior finance professional / season ticket holder**



## Bearwood

### Bullet Points

Just from playing football the club lost £34.8m last season.

The club lost £5.9m in player trading which, after stripping out a £3m loan fee for Sone Aluko then it was £8.9m, slightly more than in 2018.

The club has made small profits in relating to players that have been sold previously. This amounted to £2.4m in 2019 partly in add-on fees.

Revenues were broadly in line (though much less than 2017 when we had about £18m in parachute payments). Average attendances fell from 15,181 to 14,991 (and season tickets sales fell by 15% from 11,586 to 10,052).

Financial contribution from London Irish halved down to £300,000

Wage costs were £40.7m compared to £35.3m and the wages to turnover ratio was 198% compared to 197%. What that means is that for every £1 the club earns in revenues, it spends £2 on player wages, and that's before other operating costs are taken

into account.

The key number is the net liabilities of £36.4m. The club owes more than it owns. Over the years the club has accumulated losses of £96.6m, which are partly offset by the shareholders having injected over £60m in share capital.

So there are almost no tangible assets remaining at the club after the stadium was sold for £26.5m last year.

On the liabilities side of the balance sheet the standout number is the £67.8m owed to Renhe Sports, the parent company. One point to note is this debt seems to be interest-free (or at least very low interest rate) so that's a positive. And during the year, new shares worth £27.1m were issued to Renhe Sports to help fund the losses. The good thing about share capital is, unlike debt, it doesn't have to be repaid.

Going forward, unless FFP is relaxed, it's hard to see how such losses can continue to accrue and be dealt with. It's not a sustainable model. There will be changes,

# What's STAR been doing?

## August 2019

Surge in memberships caused by free travel offer  
Online travel booking ramped up to support the free travel initiative  
New wristband and old-style badge give-aways

## September

New mobile friendly web-site, simplified and with more frequent updates  
STAR Instagram launched  
Hall of Fame posters launched in East and Lower West concourses  
Paula Martin becomes Chair (again) with Paul Ellix and Steve Benton elected as deputies  
STAR donates £500 in support of Bury fans group (we're still feeling guilty about that 1997 abandoned league cup game!)



### Great Goalies

Reading have had many great goalies down the years. Here's three Hall of Famers who have all won honours for the club.



**STANLEY RICHARDS, 1878-89**  
The first goalkeeper to be inducted into the Hall of Fame, Richards was a key player for Reading in the late 19th century.



star-reading.org/heritage-history



**STEVE BEALE, 1968-82**  
A legendary goalkeeper who played for Reading from 1968 to 1982, Beale was known for his exceptional shot-stopping abilities.



### England Defenders

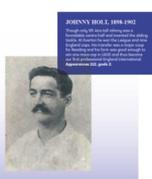
It's not often that the England international selectors have called on Reading but when they have done - it's cool, calm, skilful defenders they're looking for.



**HERBERT SMITH, 1888-89**  
A defender who played for Reading from 1888 to 1889, Smith was known for his defensive skills and leadership on the field.



star-reading.org/heritage-history



**JOHNNY BEAL, 1896-1902**  
A defender who played for Reading from 1896 to 1902, Beal was known for his defensive skills and leadership on the field.



### Star Strikers

It's goals that get star strikers into the Hall of Fame. Here are three great forwards whose cracking shots, drives, chips, flicks and headers helped Reading win promotion.



star-reading.org/heritage-history



**JIMMY QUINN, 1965-67**  
A striker who played for Reading from 1965 to 1967, Quinn was known for his goalscoring ability and leadership on the field.

## October

STAR tours the new training ground at Bearwood  
Fans Forum with new manager Mark Bowen  
STAR contributing to planning for 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary season 2021-22

## November - March 2020

STAR represents members and fans at Fan Engagement Panel, Safety Advisory Group, Senior Management Meeting and Structured Dialogue meeting  
STAR / RFC win the national award from the Football Supporters Association for the high and successful level of club-supporter engagement  
More refining of our huge store of old programmes and fanzines  
Planning for Hall of Fame evening (March) and Flanders remembrance trip (June) – both sadly postponed due to Covid-19 pandemic

# Join our team

**Like every volunteer organisation we're always on the look-out for new talent and energy.**

In the past couple of years Johnny Hunt joined the board to contribute on community and social media issues and Sam Stevenson of Club 1871 has been co-opted: all are championing younger fans. Sacha Liddiard, our Facebook guru, and Jon Hall, who looks at governance / finance and assists the women's team and online travel are also recent recruits.

**You don't have to be a board member to be part of the team.**

James Blackman 'signed' recently to look after our Instagram account while Chris Witcher continues to do great work on our policies.

STAR is a strong supporters' trust with nearly 1800 members this season, money in the bank and good relationships with the club and the wider football community. There is scope for individuals to push their own ideas or connect with campaigns such as safe standing or fairer ticket prices. Equally we're aware of the need for STAR to become more tech- and social media-savvy.

Our Board meets monthly, on the second Thursday of the month, from



8-10pm at the stadium and we now have remote conferencing participation technology .

We organise away travel and events like Fans Forums and Hall of Fame, represent members and supporters to the club, the media and national supporters' organisations and keep a watchful eye on the past, present and future of the club we love and support.

To put yourself forward for the STAR Board you simply need to be a current member aged 18 or over and nominated by two other STAR members. The formal 'terms and conditions' you'll find on the next couple of pages of this issue.

**Have a think about it, please.**



## BOARD MEMBERSHIP OF STAR

### Co-operative & Community Benefit Societies Act - Board Elections

STAR would welcome members putting themselves forward for election to the Board of Reading Football Supporters' Society Limited (trading as 'STAR'- Supporters' Trust At Reading) at its next Annual General Meeting in September 2020 (date subject to change).

In order to stand for election you need to be a fully paid up member of STAR and be aged 18 or over. You must be proposed and seconded by two other fully paid up STAR members. No STAR member may propose or second more candidates than positions to be elected.

#### Eligibility

*Please refer to Section 6 of the Election Policy (available on the STAR website). By submitting a nomination, candidates will be deemed to have accepted this Election Policy, the Society's Rules, and any other policies and rules adopted by the Society Board and the membership and agree to be bound by them.*

The completed Nomination Form is to be forwarded to: The Hon. Secretary, STAR, 156 Kidmore End Road, Emmer Green, Reading RG4 8SP.

You can also submit this Nomination Form by email to: [secretary@star-reading.org](mailto:secretary@star-reading.org). Either complete the Nomination Form in full and send as an email attachment, or complete your candidate details and arrange for your proposer and seconder to send separate emails in support of your nomination.

#### Election Statement and photograph

You must also provide an election statement of between 200-1000 words, which should be typewritten, either on a separate sheet of paper or, if your nomination is submitted by email, as a separate attachment. This will give you an opportunity to set out your platform for standing, your interests and ideas you would like to implement if elected. STAR will truncate any statement over 1000 words.

You may also submit a photograph of yourself for publication with your statement. All statements will be made available to STAR members with the voting forms and will be published on the web site.

**Closing date for receipt of nominations would usually be 31<sup>st</sup> May 2020. In the circumstances we may push this deadline back - please look on our website for further information.**

*Receipt of your nomination form will be acknowledged by email or telephone.*

#### IMPORTANT – DATA PROTECTION

In completing and returning this form, you authorise STAR to process the personal data that you have provided for the sole purpose of administering an election to the Board of STAR in accordance with the rules of the Society. The Data Controllers will ensure that the data you provide is processed and protected in accordance with the STAR Data Protection Policy. The data will only be disclosed to those authorised to receive it for the stated purpose.

**NOMINATION FORM**  
**BOARD MEMBERSHIP OF STAR**

## Seven positions to be elected

I confirm that:

- a. I wish to stand as a Candidate in the STAR Co-operative & Community Benefit Societies Act Board Elections.
- b. I agree to abide by the Society's rules; policies and resolutions (see Section 6.1 of the Election Policy).
- c. I am not disqualified from acting as an officer of the Society under one or more of the conditions outlined in Rule 58 of the Society's rules.
- d. I confirm I personally submitted this form.

**Closing date for receipt of nominations is 31<sup>st</sup> May 2020 (to be confirmed)**

<b>Full Name:</b>			
<b>STAR Membership No:</b>			
<b>Address:</b>			
<b>Post Code:</b>			
<b>E-Mail Address:</b>			
<b>Telephone Number:</b>			
<b>Signature:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	

We, the undersigned, being fully paid up STAR Members for the year to 30th June 2020 nominate the person above as a candidate for election. (No STAR member may propose or second more candidates than positions to be elected.)

	<b>PROPOSER</b>	<b>SECONDER</b>
<b>Full Name:</b>		
<b>STAR Membership No:</b>		
<b>Address:</b>		
<b>Post Code:</b>		
<b>Telephone Number:</b>		
<b>Signature:</b>		
<b>Date:</b>		

This page is blank on purpose.

Wasn't last year!



You'd filled it up  
with a running gag.

Where'd it go?



Finally ran  
out of space!



## Mark Bowen at the Fans' Forum

**Current first team coaching structure?** I was told not to have a lot of disruption, I could bring in one person – which was Eddie Niedzwiecki, an old friend and very good coach. Several of Jose's staff still with us. John O'Shea has more responsibility, he's destined to be a manager one day.

**What improvements have you made to the team?** We've got a talented group and I think they're in a false position. They are short of confidence and have to earn the right to play. I'm trying to help them to play forward earlier, we over-did it in first half against Preston. We're working at a higher intensity on the pitch and in training. I want us to be a team that is feared, I don't want teams to enjoy playing against us.

**Tactical plans?** Like any coach I want us to play good, attacking football but we need the points too. The passive game drives me mad. I hate it when teams kick off and then make 20 passes in their own half. Good defend-

ers enjoy defending. Full backs must stop crosses into the box. When midfielders receive the ball they should look forward to the strikers – like Ovie's pass to George for the goal at QPR. We may play three at the back or four, I'm not going to pin it down.

**Your own playing career at Reading?**

I knew I was coming to the end, I'd been injured, Alan Pardew rang me, I came and trained and played one game and then the contract offer was withdrawn! I think it was a pre-season game against Derby. (No, it was an AMC game in December against Leyton Orient in the middle of the PANTS protests!). I don't remember any of that, no need to go to those extremes! At the QPR game my son said why didn't you wave to the fans when they sang a burst of 'Mark Bowen's blue and white army'. I didn't hear them, I was focussed on the game'.

# Coming soon-ish, maybe

## Bearwood

**Bearwood**, the new purpose-built facility on the site of the old golf course, is we're delighted to say partially in operation. The first team are expected to move in at the start of 2020-21 season (or August 2020).

The 120 acre site was identified in 2013, bought in 2014, planning permission was granted in April, clearance work started in 2016 and then in earnest in October 2017. It's a massive project which has managed to survive three changes of ownership of the club!

## Green Park Station

We last reported this was due to open in late 2019. It's gone back to winter (or late) 2020—and that was before the present crisis which might mean even further delays.

Balfour Beatty are undertaking this £16.5m project. Whilst it will be a huge benefit to supporters from Basingstoke, Bramley and Mortimer the 15 minute walk might deter fans from the town centre. The frequent £2 return F1 bus service from Reading Station is now working well.



**Royal Elm Park**

**Que sera, sera**

## Royal Elm Park

There's not much to say on **Royal Elm Park**. The last document uploaded on the council planning website was in December 2018—it's application number 160199.

STAR's understanding is that there is (as of Feb 2020) a project manager engaged by the Thais who was looking to re-start progress. However Covid -19 may well be yet another delaying factor to add to Brexit, Crossrail delay, house price falls and the significant progress made by nearby projects such as Reading Gate Retail Park and Green Park Village housing.

## **Club 1871 has really come into its own this season with so many season ticket holders now in the South Stand.**

The club asked us to define our intentions so we came up with this mission statement 'To add another focus to improve the atmosphere and get fully behind the team, by using both old and new Reading chants to make home games feel like the best away games'.



The idea came out of a Fan Engagement Panel and was started by a group of about eight. It has grown to a larger group coming up with ideas for flags and other initiatives. The lead group had regular meetings with the club who were very supportive. This enabled a 'free beer' initiative from partners Heineken; in turn this meant more people tried the

experience and enjoyed it so much that the numbers increased and has resulted in several sell-outs.

The new chants are multiplying and several are now club standards, both about the team in general and also about specific players. With the drum the chants can keep going for much longer (and without speeding up) which gives the players the support they tell us is so important. In fact I have been asked at an away game for some lyric sheets but that is never going to happen!

There have been a few games where being positive was difficult and at least one when we failed completely in our intentions but there can be no doubt that the atmosphere at the Madejski Stadium is better now than a couple of seasons ago.

There have been some people moving into the South Stand who have not bought into the ethos completely. A few have tried to wind up the away fans and even try to cross the netting and the club moved them back to other parts of the stadium. In fact there have been conversations with the club about the possibility of making the area over 18s only. None of us want that to happen so we are appealing to any youngsters in Club1871 to join us in getting behind the team and ignoring the away supporters.

**Sam Stevenson / Paula Martin**



## The amazing free away travel offer

Just as the season was about to start we learned of the amazing offer by owner Mr Dai Yongge. He wanted to provide free coach travel to the majority of our away games, selecting the 15 furthest destinations. The idea was to increase the vocal support for the team away from home. As of 13 March, when football was suspended, we had the 7th best away record in the division (vs 21st 'best' home record) - so maybe it has worked.

It certainly caused STAR plenty of work! The offer — obviously too good to turn down — coincided with our launching online travel booking for all members, after a successful pilot scheme in 2018-19. By early September we had already gained more members for STAR than we managed in the whole of 2018-19! Processing these applications and dealing with more than doubling volumes of coach bookings kept our travel and membership teams extremely busy and all our thanks go to Colin and Mel Bishop, Jon Hall, Sacha Liddiard, Steve Benton and Paula Martin for keeping this show literally on the road.

Typically we were running four or five coaches rather than a couple to these destinations and thus more than doubling the away support by coach.

Whilst STAR has gained in income from membership fees we have lost the surplus we normally make from coach travel. The overall effect on our finances looks as if it will be slightly negative - but the upsides are getting more supporters to be aware of and join STAR, get more support behind the team and work closely with, and help, the football club.

### **WHAT IS STAR?    WHAT IS READING MATTER?**

For the benefit of any non-members or new members reading this, here's a very brief explanation. STAR is Supporters' Trust At Reading, the independent, officially recognised body that represents supporters of Reading FC. It is a democratically accountable Community Benefit Society administered by an elected Board of volunteers. Reading Matter is our annual newsletter. For newbies, page 12 is a very slow, long-running gag.

# STAR Annual General Meeting 2019

## Summary of 17<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting

5 September 2019 8pm at the Madejski Stadium

The Minutes of the 16<sup>th</sup> AGM held on 6 September 2018 were approved and signed as a true and accurate record of that meeting. There were no matters arising.

### Elections to the Board

Six candidates were standing for election: Melanie Bishop, Vicci Elliot, Paul Ellix, Kevin Lenton, Paula Martin and Mike Yeomans. Peter Matthews, Chairman of the Election Sub-Committee, proposed each candidate in turn and all were duly elected.

### Chairman's Report

- 1161 members at the end of the 2018-19 season.
- Coach travel as usual to all away grounds - 2203 passengers in total travelled to away matches.
- Representation at two RFC Senior Management Team meetings, attendance at Safety Advisory Group meetings and at Fan Engagement Panels. Continued affiliation with external groups such as the Football Supporters' Association.
- Two Fans' Forums.
- Supporters' Player of the Season – organisation of the card vote.
- One issue of Reading Matter published; regular STAR Bulletins sent out; Facebook and Twitter followers continue to increase.
- 25 new inductees at the 4<sup>th</sup> Hall of Fame event.
- Continued financial support to the Reading & District Sunday League and the RFC Deaf Team.
- Successful completion of an online travel booking pilot test.
- Signing of a formal Memorandum of Understanding with RFC in July 2019.

The Chairman gave members details about some priorities for the 2019-20 season including: a remembrance trip to Flanders in June 2020; to continue to build a structured relationship with RFC; and to offer online travel booking to all STAR members.

### Treasurer's Report

Vicci Elliot gave her report and presented audited accounts for the year ended 30 June 2019.

### President of STAR

Bobby Williams was appointed as President of STAR for a three year term.

The Chairman closed the meeting. A Fans' Forum followed with Kelly Chambers, Natasha Harding and Kirsty Pearce of Reading Women FC as guests.

# 60-prong attack?

Since our relegation to the Championship in 2013 we have fielded 60 players acquired (bought or loaned or on a loan fee) from other clubs in our midfield and forward positions. That's 60 for six shirts in seven years – and it doesn't even include all the Academy products like Jem Karacan, Liam Kelly, Andy Rinomhota etc.

## **Here they are in roughly date order, midfielders first:**

Jobi McAnuff, Garath McCleary, Royston Drenthe, Hope Akpan, Danny Guthrie, Danny Williams, Daniel Carrico, Chris Baird, Oliver Norwood, Nat Chalobah, Stephen Quinn, George Evans, Alex, Lucas Piazon, Danzell Gravenberch, Joey Van den Berg, John Swift, Roy Beerens, Pelle Clement, Jordan Mutch, Leo Bacuna, Dave Edwards, David Meyler, Ovie Ejaria, Charlie Adam, Pele.

## **And now the forwards:**

Pavel Pogrebnyak, Adam Le Fondre, Nick Blackman, Jason Roberts, Billy Sharp, Simon Cox, Yakubu, Jamie Mackie, Glen Murray, Kwesi Appiah,

Orlando Sa, Paulo Hurtado, Yann Kermorgant, Dennis Rakels, Matej Vydra, Ola John, Joseph Mendes, Yakou Meite, Callum Harriott, Adrian Popa, Lewis Grabban, Jon Dadi Bodvarsson, Mo Barrow, Sone Aluko, Chris Martin, Marc McNulty, Sam Baldock, Josh Sims, Nelson Oliveira, Lucas Joao, George Puscas, Lucas Boye, Felipe Araruna, Ayub Masika.

All these players have been on the wage books in our seven year Championship stint and all but half a dozen have been signed in that period – which means transfer fees, loan fees, agents' cuts, signing on fees assuming they still have them.

**Crikey! That list shows how difficult and expensive it is to run a football club and what constant changes of manager and director of football lead to.**

In these seven seasons we've averaged just 1.2 goals per game and finished 7th, 19th, 17th, 3rd, 20th, 20th and 14th.





**Rob Coleman and Jackie Evans of RFC with Roger Titford of STAR at the awards ceremony at the Tower of London**

**STAR was proud and delighted to receive, alongside Reading FC, the Football Supporters Association (FSA) award for 'Supporter Engagement'. This is the first time that this award has been made.**

**This strangely heavy trophy now resides at the football club but we hope to have it on display at our next AGM / Fans Forum.**

**It's a tribute to the work that STAR has put in over the past 18 years in developing that relationship and providing benefits for members and supporters. It reflects not just on the past year in which we've executed the free travel offer and created the Structured Dialogue mechanism but the years in which we've been involved with the club in the Player of the Season, Hall of Fame, Remembrance Service, Raise the Hoops display, Fans Forums and various sponsorships.**

**Our profile with the FSA leads to us being asked to advise other supporter groups from time to time. Recently we talked to one trust about Structured Dialogue (they thought they could do in six months what took us seven years) and another about away coach travel where they were astonished by the detail of our operation. It's only by doing this we realise how far we've come. But we're well aware that the next few years will bring new challenges—and we ask for your help in meeting them. Please consider standing for the Board or helping STAR.**

READING MATTER—Published on behalf of STAR

Reading Football Supporters' Society Limited. trading as STAR

Registered Society under the Cooperative and Community Benefits Societies Act 2014