

ANDREW MATHEWSON



I confess that I have not been a lifelong Reading fan, like many STAR members have. My first football memories are of Wantage Town, when dad played, and I started watching the professional game seriously at Coventry City, while at college in the late 1970s. Indeed I first saw Reading playing at Highfield Rd. (Away win.)

But I have been following Reading since the 2012/13 season. I am a season ticket holder, now in the South Stand, get to most away games, and see a number of academy and women's games each season.

I first came into contact with STAR the way most people do, through using their coaches for travel to away matches. That is a great service for fans run by a really dedicated team. But through meeting other STAR members I have also become more aware of its role in representing fans interests with the club, and representing Reading fans' interests in the wider football world.

I am in my fifth year on an active retirement, having worked as a civil servant in the Ministry of Defence for 35 years, including two spells on loan to the Diplomatic Service in Brussels. The next few years, as football comes back and clubs recover from the pressures of the COVID pandemic, will be uniquely challenging. The supporter experience is bound to change - no one knows how or for how long. These are going to be challenging times for the club and fans.

I do not at this stage have any particular objective in mind in offering myself to the STAR board., beyond helping get through this tricky period. I have a questioning and inquiring mind and I believe that over my professional career I have been good at working supportively with other people, communicating clearly both orally and in writing, understanding the wider context and thinking about future direction. I should like to make my personal attributes, my time and my commitment to Reading FC available to the STAR board.