

# ARSENAL SUPPORTER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ARSENAL INDEPENDENT SUPPORTERS' ASSOCIATION NUMBER 2



WHAT'S GOING ON HERE? SEE PAGE 2.



IN ARSENAL WE TRUST PAGE 3.

## ARE YOU TOTTENHAM IN DISGUISE?

JULIAN HARRIS REPORTS ON SUMMER FROLICS AND WIDESPREAD RELIEF THAT THE FINAL ASHBURTON GROVE DECISION IS SOON TO BE TAKEN



Whilst most footy fans took a rest over the summer AISA has been busier than David Dein and the Arsenal credit card, organising support for the Ashburton Grove plans, and especially in countering the noise of the highly organised "residents" group who want to see Arsenal out of Islington.

What could be called the semi-final, the last consultation meeting before the decision-making Council, took place at the Union Chapel in Upper Street on July 24.

Whilst thousands (well, two hundred actually) of the opposition marched

down Holloway Road, we cunningly arrived at the venue early, ensuring we had the best places for the fight of the century. If only entry to Arsenal matches was so easy!

The moaning residents arrived at the venue with their loudspeakers, only to be outchanted by us gooners. Their 'Dump the Dump' came a poor second to our 'Are you Tottenham in disguise?' as we warmed up for the real thing.

The match itself was a stormer. The referee, sorry chairman, Councillor James Kempton, changed the debating rules before we started, but our team was well-prepared (too

well-prepared, moaned the moaners, unused to any opposition on their home ground).

Appropriately fourteen men and women spoke in favour of the Ashburton Grove plans (i.e the first team and three substitutes) led by AISA officers, Steven Powell and Paul Matz, and also including Bernard Azulay, Rab Bennetts, Amy Lawrence, Graham Stone, Tony Ward and local Eastender actress, Carinne Skinner-Carter.

The many councillors in attendance couldn't fail to be impressed as we now move on to the really BIG one – the Council meeting that will make the decision on whether our new 60,000 stadium gets the go ahead.

Just in case you think it's a done deal can I stress to you that it really is "up for grabs now", to quote the late-lamented Brian Moore. With just a few weeks before this cup final now is the time for you to show your

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PAUL MATZ  
AISA SECRETARY

Welcome to the second edition of the AISA newsletter. We've had a fantastically busy first year.

AISA has established itself as the independent campaigning organisation run by and for Arsenal supporters. Our priority has been campaigning for the new ground at Ashburton Grove, in particular influencing the decision-makers; Islington Council and London Mayor, Ken Livingstone.

We've started work on plans for Arsenal supporters to be able to buy into ownership of the Club at an affordable price through a Shareholders' Trust.

We've raised with the Club the way Ticketmaster works, issues about away travel, as well as ticket pricing and other issues.

And we've held a wonderfully enjoyable gala dinner, something we hope to repeat as an annual event. We've also affiliated to the two national fans organizations, the FSA and the NFFSC.

We believe in working co-operatively with all Arsenal fan groups – the Supporters Club and various branches, as well as all the fanzines. Many thanks to all our friends in these organisations who have supported our work.

Every AISA member is an Arsenal supporter. Are we patsies for the Club? No! When and if we think the Board are getting it wrong we'll stand up and say so, just like any good friend would.

One thing's for sure. Whatever AISA says and does will be decided by our members. If you've not done so already join us today!

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support by writing to the Leader of Islington Council, Steve Hitchins at Islington Town Hall, Upper Street, London N1 2UD, or email him at sarahnsteve@cix.co.uk

It's worth reminding Cllr Hitchins that supporting these proposals is the only way to ensure Arsenal stay in Islington, and that other community benefits for Islington include:

- Almost 4,000 local jobs will be created or safeguarded
- A £5 million transport package is included in the plans
- Over 2,000 new homes will be built

**This is YOUR LAST CHANCE to play your part in building Arsenal's future, in securing a brand-new 60,000 stadium, all within half a mile of Arsenal's home for the past eighty years. Do it today.**

## WITHOUT COMMENT!

"The main agenda at the Neighbourhood Committee was due to be the regeneration of the area. Only a handful of the public were there and we were told that the Stoke Newington Youth Forum had planned to attend, but the meeting clashed with an Arsenal match."

Linda Smith  
Councillor, Hackney Borough Council

# GALA DINNER A BIG SUCCESS



Arsenal legends at the AISA dinner

Attended by over 200 fans the first AISA Gala Dinner was a big success, thanks largely to the evening's guest speakers; Charlie George, Liam Brady, Sammy Nelson and Frank McLintock.

Master of Ceremonies, Tom Watt, kept the evening moving along in an expert manner, and the auction and raffle prizes of autographed shirts, footballs, books and hospitality packages made the night an exceptional one for the lucky winners.

Special thanks to Arsenal Director, Ken Friar, without whose support the event could not have taken place.

# IN ARSENA



Plans are proceeding to set up a Supporters Trust at Arsenal. The idea is simple: Arsenal fans should be able to own part of the Club we all love so much.

A Supporters Trust is a way in which you can both contribute to and be involved in Arsenal F.C., whether you want to invest twenty quid, a thousand pounds or even more. By pooling our shareholdings we get a much bigger say than we otherwise would. Whether you already own a share or two or not a Supporters Trust is a way of

making that a collective... This initial members at meeting last our two key planning per Ashburton C tatives were issue with A Director, Ken newsletter v

ARSENAL FANS OWN PART OF LOVE SO MUCH

Football cl became limit accident. As more popula new grounds wage bills m protect the c ruinous perso register clubs It was also a money towar It's only b

## AISA AGM



Our annual meeting this season will take place at the Hen and Chickens on Sunday 13 January. Meet up in the bar at 1.00 pm - the meeting is planned to take place from 2.00-3.00. Kick off that day against Liverpool is at 4.00. The Hen and Chickens is directly opposite Highbury & Islington station - all Arsenal supporters are very welcome.



## NATIONAL ANTI-RACIST WEEK OF ACTION IN FOOTBALL

AISA is supporting this week by distributing the special football anti-racist fanzines before the Blackburn match on Saturday 20 October. We've also written to the club to suggest some joint fan and club activity inside the ground.

If you want to get involved please email [seb.steer@aisa.org](mailto:seb.steer@aisa.org) or ring Seb on 07980 929150.



This was the moment that Sol Campbell made his debut for Arsenal; but what was him? Enter the AISA caption competition and win yourself a free subscription for a year of Highbury High fanzine. Entries to [paulmatz@arsenal.fc.net](mailto:paulmatz@arsenal.fc.net) or AISA Secretary, 11 Tanqueray, Gillespie Road, London N5 1LE.

# AL WE TRUST

## STEVEN POWELL EXPLAINS WHAT AN ARSENAL SUPPORTERS TRUST WILL MEAN IN PRACTICE

share work as part of pool. tive was voted by AISA's founding October as one of priorities, alongside mission for Grove. AISA represent- due to raise the Arsenal Managing with Edelman, as this event to press.

SHOULD BE ABLE TO THE CLUB WE ALL

clubs in this country ed companies by the game became r and professional s had to be built and et the only way to original members from onal debts was to s as limited companies. way of raising some rds club development. een in the past

twenty years or so that the money in football has attracted lots of people from outside the game. Some of these people, in other clubs, have been very dodgy. As far as Arsenal goes it has a slightly unusual company structure. It's not listed on either of the two main stock exchanges, the London Stock Exchange or the Alternative Investment Market. The public can buy shares in Arsenal though through something called OFFEX, which is a market for shares in unlisted companies.

### A TRUST WILL ALLOW SHAREHOLDERS TO POOL THEIR VOTING STRENGTH TOGETHER TO FORM AN INFLUENTIAL GROUPING

There are just over 61,000 issued shares at Arsenal, including the new shares recently bought by the media group Granada, which now owns 9.9% of the issued shares at Highbury. If you look at the Arsenal shareholders' register you'll see that,

aside from the big shareholdings of Danny Fitzman and David Dein which all Arsenal supporters know about, there are nearly 1,500 shareholders in total, many owning one or two shares.

Most of these will be supporters who've bought a share not as an investment but so that they can own part of the Club they love. A Trust would allow current shareholders to pool their voting strength together to form an influential grouping. It would also allow supporters who don't own shares at the moment to buy into ownership at an affordable price.

Many of us can't afford over £2,000, which is what an Arsenal share is quoted at currently. Fans feel that they own the club 'morally' – they built the traditions over the generations and made it the club that is it and make it special, so why not turn that moral ownership into something more concrete?

There's been a tendency to see supporter-ownership as something

for smaller clubs in financial trouble. I think that's a big mistake. Most Gooners I know are, like me, broadly happy with the current regime. Whilst I don't agree with everything the Board does we could do an awful lot worse.

### FANS FEEL THAT THEY OWN THE CLUB 'MORALLY' . . . SO WHY NOT TURN THAT MORAL OWNERSHIP INTO SOMETHING MORE CONCRETE?

The problem is that there's nothing legally to stop the current majority shareholders from selling out to somebody who would take the Club in a completely opposite direction. And, whilst there's no suggestion they're going to do that it must be to everyone's advantage if a greater number of supporters own a slice of the Club.

We've already got a list of fans who've expressed an interest in forming a Trust. If you would like to be added to this just e-mail me at [sl.powell@virgin.net](mailto:sl.powell@virgin.net)

## ARSENAL CREATE COMPANY WHAT DOES IT MEAN? PHILLIP ALEXIS REPORTS



being said behind year of the nington Terrace,

In mid-July Arsenal announced the creation of a new corporate structure, with the separation of the club into two areas:

- (i) Arsenal Holdings plc (the new entity)
- (ii) Arsenal Football Club plc

Arsenal said that the restructuring of the club "will allow the financing of the new stadium to be put in place" and that the new company would allow the Ashburton Grove project to be separated from the normal football activities of the club. The club obtained approval from shareholders at its recent AGM.

All football clubs that list on the stock exchange have to create a plc holding company that in turn owns the football club. This is done in order to circumvent FA rules, which were designed to prevent commercialisation, but never enforced.

However, the creation of such a company is not necessarily the first step towards a stockmarket flotation, as there are other reasons why businesses restructure (tax reasons, for example). The club was reported in Sunday Business as saying that it has no "immediate plans" for a flotation. In any case, it would not appear to be a good time for the club as most football shares are performing badly.

## FANS FORUM SET UP

One of the suggestions made by AISA at our first meeting with the Club – the establishment of a Fans Forum – has become a reality, with the first meeting planned for 20 October. The Forum is an ideal opportunity for fans views to be articulated and better understood by the Club.

As with AISA, the only items ruled out for discussion are matters relating directly to the team.

The principal issues of discussion are planned to be:

- Ticketing
- Stadium development
- Merchandise
- Away supporters and away travel
- Community activities
- Supporter consultation

AISA will be represented on the Forum, together with the Supporters Club and thirteen other fans. If you have an issue you want us to raise please contact [paulmatz@arsenalfc.net](mailto:paulmatz@arsenalfc.net) or ring Paul on 07850 920899.

## AISA PLAYER OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Who do you think is Arsenal's Player of the Year for 2001? Voting for the AISA Player of the Year, and Young Player of the Year has now opened. All members are invited to submit their vote now.

● I think the AISA Arsenal Player of the Year award should go to

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● I think the AISA Arsenal Young Player of the Year award should go to

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Name

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Address

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Return to Tony Ward  
21 Stock Orchard Crescent  
London N7 9SL

## TICKETMASTER TALES

Our email message last year that we were visiting Ticketmaster brought forward a litany of complaints about the service that Ticketmaster offers TRS members. In fact there were far more moans and stories about the bad service than there were about the postage and booking charges.

Leading the way were of course the massive delays in getting through, but many other aspects were also discussed. AISA put forward a number of positive suggestions that we felt would improve the service, and we were promised some feedback both from Ticketmaster and Arsenal.

Unfortunately the Director we met, Nick Blackburn, has now left the organisation, so we are pursuing with Arsenal all the issues raised, as well as the extreme difficulties that many TRS members faced in renewing their membership over the summer.

Watch this space!

## WHO'S WHO IN AISA

To take part in AISA, contribute to this newsletter, or suggest an issue AISA should raise with the Club write to AISA at 121 Jack Clow Road, London E15 3AR, or contact one of the AISA Officers or Committee members

Steven Powell (Chair)	sl.powell@virgin.net	07881 950613
Paul Matz (Secretary)	paulmatz@arsenalfc.net	07850 920899
Geoff Bedingfield (Treasurer)	geoffbedingfield@aol.com	07711 130033
Katie Halling	katieha@hhcl.com	
Julian Harris	julian.harris@aisa.org	
Tony Jenks	tony.jenks@ssmb.com	
Alan Juett	alanjuett@aol.com	
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Lisa McGuinness	penguini123@freenetname.co.uk	
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Graham Stone	graham.stone@msdw.com	
Tony Ward	atmnpward@aol.com	
Mike Winnett	mwinnett@satchmo.win-uk.net	

### Other useful contact addresses

Arsenal Football Supporters Club	154 St.Thomas' Road, London N4 2QP	
Gunflash	154 St.Thomas' Road, London N4 2QP	gunflash@arsenal.org.uk
Highbury High	PO Box 3302, Brighton BN1 3WH	ian@highburyhigh.co.uk
The Gooner	PO Box 7499, London WC1N 3XX	thegooner@arsenalfc.net
Up the Arse	PO Box 3252, London NW1 0NL	editor@upthearse.net

## SIGN UP TODAY!

Joining AISA as a full member costs as little as £4 a year (£2 for students, unemployed and retired). It gives you a say and keeps you informed.

It helps if you can pay your subscription by standing order. You can pay on any day of the month you decide. You'll also save yourself £1. Thanks!

I apply to join AISA

*I agree to abide by the constitution and rules. (copy on request)*

*Please use BLOCK CAPITALS*

Surname

First name(s)

Address

Postcode

*E-mail address*

Home

Work

*Telephone*

Home

Work

Mobile

### Subscription levels

Full membership	£5 per year
Full membership by standing order	£4 per year
Students/unemployed/retired	£2 per year
Associate membership	£2 per year
Overseas membership	£10 per year

I enclose a cheque/money order for  £  
*in payment of full/concessionary/associate/overseas membership (payable to Arsenal Independent Supporters' Association)*

I enclose a further donation of  £  
 to support AISA work, making a total of  £

or

I would like to pay by standing order

The Manager

Postcode

*Insert the name/address of your bank/building society*

Please pay to Arsenal Independent Supporters' Association on

*Insert the date of your first payment due now*

the sum of  £

the same amount on 01 July each

year thereafter until further notice  £

Your account number

Your sort code

Signed

date

### Arsenal Independent Supporters' Association

Account number 65066801 sort code 08-92-99

Co-operative Bank plc, Business Direct,  
 King's Valley, Yew Street, Stockport SK4 2JU

Reference (office use only)

Return to AISA Secretary, 11 Tannington Terrace,  
 Gillespie Road, London N5 1LE



## ARSENAL V CHELSEA HOSPITALITY PACKAGE

AISA is auctioning this very special treat, with all proceeds towards the costs of our Ashburton Grove campaign. For two lucky people it will be a very special day and, as the game is on Boxing Day, it could be an ideal Christmas present.

The package includes:

- Bucks Fizz reception
- 4 course meal served with wine and minerals
- Full programme of entertainment to help you relax as you dine, including close-up magicians and video presentation of the latest AFC match action
- Guest celebrity speaker/s
- Match seats in the West Upper stand
- Complimentary beers, wines and soft drinks – pre and post match
- Competition to win a signed AFC ball
- Matchday programme and corporate gift

All bids to  
 Geoff Bedingfield  
 21 Stock Orchard Crescent,  
 London N7 9SL  
 or  
 geoffbedingfield@aol.com  
 by Friday 30 November.



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