

Rams Trust 2025 – Chair Report

After a few too many nail biting moments, survival in the Championship on the last day of the season capped a couple of transformative years for the club, following our well documented challenges and promotion for League 1 last year. I think all Derby County fans realised the significance of maintaining Championship status, both in terms of the level and standard of competition and also for the financial stability of the club. We offer thanks and congratulations to John Eustace, the coaching staff and players for retaining our league status.

RamsTrust continue to be very appreciative of the stability and leadership we have enjoyed since David Clowes and Clowes Development took over the ownership of the club. As we always state, whilst as fans, all members of the Rams Trust Board and members are very focused on performance on the pitch, our goal is to work for our members and the wider fan base to ensure that our club is run in the long term interests of the fans, regardless of the division we play in.

As I stated last year, the purpose of RamsTrust is to strengthen the voice of fans in the decision making process at the football club. Since we met here last year, we have seen the Supporters Board become more fully established. I have been delighted to undertake the role of the first Chair of the Supporters Board, working alongside representation from Punjabi Rams and four independent board members.

This first year has been very much focused on establishing the foundations for the Supporters Board. We have established detailed terms of reference, meeting cadences and are working hard to build visibility within the wider fan base. We have a dedicated page on the Derby County website where all meetings are summarised and have set up an email address for fans to reach out directly to us. As a Supporters Board, we recognise we have more to do on communication and this will be a key priority as we move in to Year 2. We recognise that Derby County have been actively supportive of the establishment of a Supporters Board and have worked closely with Stephen Pearce and the rest of the Derby County management team to build the right levels of constructive challenge and debate within the meetings. We appreciate the commitment and openness from the club in the meetings we have held.

Rams Trust continues to play an active part in the SCG alongside other supporters groups. We fully recognise that there is an opportunity to articulate the role and remit of the SCG more clearly and will actively play our role with the other supporters groups to help define this.

In the wider football community, the Football Governance Act 2025 has received royal assent and has been passed by government. RamsTrust has actively engaged with local MPs, meeting with several of them to discuss the governance bill, and also worked with the FSA in providing feedback to proposals.

This legislation comes at a time when we continue to see football clubs and their fans face uncertain futures. Fans of Sheffield Wednesday and Morecambe Town know first hand the pain that this causes – with owners unwilling or unable to fund operations at the risk of the clubs very existence.

While the Independent Regulator and the Football Governance Act will not universally fix these issues, they offer an additional layer of protection to fans and offers an opportunity for football fans to have a meaningful voice that will be heard when shaping the future of the game. There will be other clubs who face uncertain futures and whilst our focus is and always will be Derby County, we advocate for all football fans who are facing uncertain futures.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow RamsTrust board members for their huge commitment and hard work this year. As always, Angie Kerry has undertaken a huge amount of work on behalf of all members in her role as Secretary and Membership Secretary. We are indebted to her. I would once again like to thank Jim Coyle for his unwavering support as Vice Chair and Tris Weavers as Treasurer. Steve Kitson has taken on a key role on communications for us and David Watts has been co-opted to take a lead role on governance and link with the FSA which has been pivotal this year. Their commitment and contribution, along with those I haven't personally mentioned, is of huge value and I appreciate them all volunteering their time.

We are losing a few valued members of our board this year – Ollie Wright has been fantastic with Steve on our Communications, Kevin Savage, who has supported across the board and finally Tristan Weavers who is stepping down. ON behalf of the Rams Trust members and the rest of the board, I offer sincere thanks to each and every one of you.

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