

Will Barrett Answers

- 1. Are any of the candidates considering ways to reduce the amount of plastic used on match days? There seems to be a huge amount of plastic drinking glasses, which appear to get thrown away after a single use.**

I think that this is something that can be reviewed and acted on appropriately in collaboration with the operations, commercial, and hospitality teams at the club. At present, where possible, all plastic that is not placed in the appropriate bin is collected by volunteers after the match and during the week, and subsequently recycled (or incinerated), but perhaps there are cost effective ways to improve this situation further, so I will investigate.

- 2. Have you done any unpaid work for the Trust-Club over the last 5 years that we Supporters would know about if so what and why did you get involved?**

Over the past five years I have been employed on various contracts (funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund) to coordinate the heritage activities and displays at the club. However these are all part time contracts, and so have often worked more than my paid hours to deliver our programme of works. I have also volunteered to support the Trust Comms group, and have been involved in the recent Stars campaign on a voluntary basis. In addition, I am also in the process of creating a new website for the Trust, which will be launched ahead of next season, and the work on this is free of any charge. While I could have pursued more lucrative jobs, there are none that could have given me the same satisfaction or pride as my work at ECFC, and so I hope to be able to replicate as a Trustee. My dad was the vicar of Whipton and St Thomas in his time; so I've been brought up to be a community man... it's just that my parish of choice is St James Park.

- 3. Why did you join The Trust?**

In short, it was because it was about time I did! For many years I saw my contribution to the club as being the ticket and other items that I bought on match day and throughout the year. However, through increased personal income and more active engagement with the Trust - along with an understanding of what it does, and could do in the future - led me to want to contribute financially and become a paid up member. I am sure I am not alone in this scenario, and that there are similar stories amongst the fan base, so I aim to look into this on an empirical basis, and explore what we can do to encourage those who want to support the club further to join the Trust.

- 4. In your own household/family is anyone a Trust member if so who, if not do you think you could help them see why they should join.**

My brother is a Trust member, and now I am assured that my parents will follow suit. Again it is the community angle that I have played here (rather than anything for personal gain). The more funds we have the more we can support our academy, first team, and staff, as well as linking into the community in collaboration with the club and CCT. I often use the term 'more than a club' and, in explaining this to people in more detail, they see that supporting the Trust (through membership) is a way of contributing directly to that ethos.

5. Why should new members join in the future?

Why should people join... good question! I don't think that people *should* join, not least when people contribute to the club and its wider work in many different ways. However, I would positively encourage people to join, as the growth of the Trust, under good governance, will directly lead to the growth of our football club, both on and off the pitch, which will have benefits for us all, not just on a Saturday afternoon but throughout the week. From a philosophical point of view, joining the Trust makes you part of something special in football. I have always been keen to promote football as a live show, as opposed to just a TV programme, and through Trust membership you can go even further and take a direct approach being a part of a football club and not just a consumer. For me this is valuable, and an important part of what it is to be a Grecian and a passionate member of our local community. We are more than a club, and so I say to people, come and be a part of that.

6. Aside from whatever technical and business skills you feel you can bring to the role, what do you think is the best personal quality you possess that will make you an effective Trustee?"

Calmness, diligence, brevity, and the ability to give people more than they asked for.

7. Would you have liked to see the hustings on a match day, like 6.30pm last Saturday after the Plymouth game with the Centre Spot closing then would have been a fantastic time for fans to meet the candidates.

I would personally have liked the hustings held on a day where my house had not been burgled! Forgive my flippancy, but this shows that there perhaps is not a perfect day for a hustings, as circumstances are varied, and, at times, evidentially unpredictable. Ahead of a match would be the ideal scenario, but I understand that the fixture computer was not kind to us for November this year. Perhaps next time out we can be sure to look at this in a practical sense and ensure that the hustings is held at the most appropriate time for all candidates and the majority of Trust membership... it may even be prudent to host more than one hustings, so I will look to explore that also.

8. How would you make the Elections more focused by the Club & Media to get more fans involved and understanding their vote counts.

This is something that I would like to work on next year by offering support, guidance, and a suite of campaign materials to all candidates, as well as working with the media team at ECFC to create mutually beneficial content. More visual content would help, so I will propose that all candidates are interviewed on a level playing field in the run up to the next elections. And posters... BIG posters for all corners and sides of the ground that send a direct message to fans in the build up that their vote counts, whilst also positively promoting the Trust at the same time. We must remember that not all of our members are digitally active, so a range of materials that can be distributed during an agreed period would serve to reach as many of the electorate as possible, whilst also enlivening the campaign process for candidates and members alike.

9. The Trust Logo is missing from a lot of prominent locations within the Club how would you get more of a natural link between the Trust & Club

With the heritage work at the club we could not have done it without working with the club and Trust in unison, and so I am keen to keep this approach up as a Trustee. I am also adamant about seeing the Trust presence improved at the ground, not just on match days, but through the week, so have a list of proposals that I would like to set in motion as soon as possible, including a prominent branded placement outside the stadium which can be used both as a point of sale for the Trust, and as a contact point for the membership. I also echo Alistair's point about celebrating the 20th anniversary of the formation of the Trust, and so the museum will be working together with the Trust and club to do just that.

10. Do you think the Trust should take more advantage of the in house Club media departments like The 360, Club Websites, Match Day Programme, internet outlets, Local & Nation media contacts.

I'm not sure that it is a case of taking advantage, but absolutely agree that we should work in unison to promote all aspects of the ECFC community. As the programme editor, and a new member of the media team, I am well placed to work with my colleagues on this, and am keen to do so over the course of my tenure. I must say that in my experience the media team do excellent work and offer a great deal of support to the Trust. Most recently, the always-excellent Scott Palfrey worked with me to produce the STARS campaign leaflets, and also produced the posters that can be seen around the Park for the same cause. As for local and national media contacts, Stu James and Matt Bamsey are always supportive, while there was a recent article in the Guardian online about our Academy and Matt Taylor, while CCT received national attention for the brilliant work of Danny Harris and the NCS scheme. In the modern-era we should utilise all formats of the media

as much as possible, and so I will always be looking for ways to do this, and as promised in my manifesto, suggestions will be welcomed as I look to represent our many voices, and stories.

11. How would you improve next years Trust Elections from encouraging fans to stand for election and how the Trust Focuses on bringing the candidates to the memberships thoughts.

I think that further promotion of what the Trust is, what it does, and why it is important that we grow our membership, would help on this front. While we are good at promoting this to our existing membership and followers, we must look at ways of reaching beyond these boundaries into the wider community. As noted in a previous answer, I would also like to offer direct advice and support to other potential candidates, and to create a suite of campaign material options for these individuals, in order to broaden the election process so that it can be engaged with by anyone who has the will and desire to either stand for election, or to support someone in doing so. Again, next year is the 20th anniversary, so let's make a big deal of it, and make it the most energetic and broad election yet in honour of that.

12. Would you like to see the Trust improve the assets for the Club and what opportunities do you feel we are missing at the moment that could bring long-term gains for our football club.

All organisations should look to improve their assets, in order to maximise potential and revenue, so I would dearly like to see this. My focus, as stated in my manifesto, is to improve the assets for the Academy, the first team, and all ECFC staff, but rather than state here what these should be, I would want my colleagues and I to speak directly to those people in order to ascertain and prioritise what is needed to improve performance in all areas of the football club.

13. How would you make the Trust website more prominent with Exeter City FC Fans.

I am currently working on a redesign for the website to be launched ahead of next season, aiming to improve the organisation and delivery of content, and, above all, the user experience. Of course a new website in itself does not make a website more prominent, and so a range of new, and regular, content will be designed and delivered to engage the fan-base, and a strategy put in place to share this in tandem with club channels. Myself, Jon and Julien Beer are currently working on plans for this, and are determined to have more content created with Trust members of all ages, whilst also providing more content about the thing that we all care about the most; the Football!!!!

14. Do you think that Exeter City AFC Limited should post the full company accounts and not the edited version on company's house, and also push for all EFL clubs to do the same?

I agree to all of this, although not necessarily in the same order. I think we should push for all EFL clubs to do the same, and if we have to lead by example to achieve this then I would support it once all the implications of doing so are properly reviewed and outlined.

15. What's the candidates views on GESP " Mid Devon, East Devon, Teignbridge and Exeter City Council, in partnership with Devon County Council, are teaming up to create the "Greater Exeter Strategic Plan" and the new sports venue mentioned?

- a. **"An sports stadium and concert arena with a capacity for 20,000 people could be built in the Greater Exeter area". No specific location for where any stadium would go has yet been decided. Cllr Christophers said it would have to be accessible for all four councils in the GESP. He said-"Making it accessible for all four areas cuts it down to around only four or five sites that can meet all the criteria we are looking at," Cllr Christophers said. "It is too early to be site specific but we are having discussions about it now. "Any stadium may need to grow over time and would have to be built so it can expand as it could be something that draws people in from all over the south west."**

My understanding of this, through the limited information provided in the local press, is that this scheme does not currently have a mandate. However, if there has been, or should ever be, a proposal to produce such a facility, then the viability of a move should be looked at forensically with the upmost seriousness. This examination should take into account financial, practical, structural, infrastructural and emotional considerations, and explore in great detail the impact on players, staff, fans, and the local community. In reading this question I think of two clubs, in Swansea and Coventry. For one, the move across the City to the Liberty Stadium was an instigator in the rapid rise of the football club, while for the other, the move to the Ricoh Arena correlated with the demise of the club, and a perennial nightmare. Understanding what happened at these clubs, and other choice case studies, would have to be part of a broad investigation, because if we could ever countenance leaving our spiritual home, it has to be for a winning scenario that sees us create a new, positive and vibrant chapter for our football club.

- b. **With the Exeter City Community Trust (CCT) strap line used over the last 2 years "Making Greater Exeter Greater" and Club Board Directors using Greater Exeter**

in the press there is an assumption that talks have taken place to move ECFC outside Exeter.

My reading of this is that CCT seek to work beyond the boundaries of Exeter to engage and benefit as wide a part of the community as possible, and that there is not necessarily a correlation between the two slogans to suggest that talks have taken place. Of course, I am not yet privy to such information, so look forward to learning more should this indeed be the case.

c. If we had to move do you think the best 2 locations would be Exeter Area Park Whipton inside Exeter or Westpoint outside Exeter.

While this is currently hypothetical, as a former resident of Whipton, and a fan of football within the City, I would go for Arena Park. However, I would have grave concerns about the validity of such a location given the current limitations on external infrastructure such as local facilities, amenities, transport, and parking. To ever leave St James Park, it would have to improve on our current situation, whilst also attracting a whole new wave of fans, and I just don't think that either of these options would achieve that. Would need much more information though to make a proper judgement, but it is an interesting question to ponder.

16. Under Trust Rules this would need to go to the vote of Trust members, how would you guide members if ever to be voted on.

This would depend entirely on very specific details, and so cannot be answered accurately here. Should this ever become a reality, then rest assured that every detail would be examined and explored, in order to arrive at an opinion that could be shared by all on the Trust with 100% conviction.

17. Would you keep the younger Supporters involved and if ever to be voted on a move would you include the Junior Grecians in that vote.

Yes, all fans should be entitled to have their say. In order to do so, the information and opinion of those who know the details inside-out should be conveyed clearly and concisely for all age groups, so that informed decisions can be made, and that the health of our club and community can be preserved for all, regardless of their opinion.