

MEMBERSHIP OFFER  
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# THE CLARET'S TRUST

ONE CLUB ONE FUTURE



Photo: ALK

## 2021: A TIME AND PACE

After months of speculation we ended 2020 with the news that Burnley Football Club had been taken over by ALK Capital who have bought an 84 per cent stake for £200 million.

The Trust immediately welcomed the new Chairman Alan Pace and the Club's new owners, and are encouraged to hear of the new owners' understanding of the special place the Club holds in our communities and the passion of our supporters, as well as their commitment to maintaining stability at all levels of the Club while looking to provide a path to growth. We are particularly pleased that they view their investment as a long-term commitment.

### Fans will be waiting to see what transpires with comings and goings

As the transfer window looms, undoubtedly fans will be watching and waiting with interest to see what transpires in terms of comings and goings. Without doubt we urgently need investment in the squad but, as we all know, Sean Dyche has a clear idea of what he wants and who can fit in with his squad. It will be interesting to see what happens

and will be an early taster of what we might expect for the future.

But it is, of course, early days and there are many questions we all have. We have delayed issuing the newsletter in the hope we would have more information – indeed when the newsletter content was being collated no takeover had been confirmed and as such it was a case of 'hold the front page'!

As one of the largest small shareholders at the Club, the Trust Board are seeking an early meeting with the new Chairman of the Club and will be looking at building an ongoing dialogue with the new owners, and looking for the answers to some of the outstanding questions. **As such our Q&A meeting with Trust members is to be rearranged – a new date will be announced once we have met with the new owners.** If you have not already registered interest but would like to attend our Q&A please contact our Secretary by email or just keep a look out for an email with details of the new date.

In addition to sending a message welcoming the new owners, the Trust also extended our thanks to the outgoing Board members – notably Honorary Trust member Barry Kilby and the long-serving Clive Holt, who is also a Trust member – something which we reiterate now.

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January 2021

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- Lifetime membership offer





## Chairman's statement

# After 2020, here's to a new future

I want to start by wishing all members of the Clarets Trust and indeed the wider Burnley FC family a very happy New Year – let us hope it is much better that 2020 has been. I hope everyone had a Happy Christmas even if somewhat different from previous years – let us hope it does not lead to a big Covid increase.

Burnley FC enters a new year with a clear challenge to keep the Club out of the relegation zone. The 2019/20 season was, of course, unique: suspended for a couple of months and then extended well into the summer. The Clarets did very well in the extended period and ended up in the top half of the table in 10th position. It was a pity to see some players not extending their contracts to complete the season. I cannot deny that like most fans I expected some new players in before the close of the transfer window. With

injuries we started the season with a very small squad and struggled to get the results we wanted.

We also have had weeks of talks about

### **We have had a run of success envied by many big city clubs**

possible takeover of the Club, and on 31 December it was officially announced. We are still waiting to learn the finer details and what is indicated for investment in players. Clearly the Premier League does need a lot of money and regrettably coronavirus has hit clubs' finances hard. We ended last season playing behind closed doors and have continued that in the new season. Even where fans have

now been admitted they have minimal numbers – and of course we are not yet allowed into Turf Moor.

Burnley has always been very much a local community team and over the recent years has been well run. Finances have been tightly and sensibly controlled and we have had a run of success that has been envied by many of the big city clubs. Now the takeover has been confirmed, let us hope the new owners have the same commitment not only to the Club, but the Town and Community of Burnley.

Again I wish you all a Happy New Year and here's hoping it proves to be a really good year for Burnley Football Club.

All the best,  
Up the Clarets.

**Peter Pike**  
Chair, Clarets Trust

## Derek Gill, former BFC director, passes away

Born 12 May 1933, Derek spent most of his life in Burnley. He married Kathleen in 1956 and they had seven children. A trained accountant, he went on to set up his own very successful business where four of his children worked. He was a Director for more than 30 years, until May 2019.

Derek was well known as a particularly good tenor singer and performed at many venues throughout the North West. He was also a keen crown-green bowler and was a member of Ightenhill



**Financial wizard: Derek Gill**

Bowling Club, serving as club treasurer for many years. He was a parishioner at St Mary Magdalene's RC Church and a

member of Burnley Catenians for more than 40 years.

Derek served as a Director of Burnley Football Club in very difficult financial times – his stories about the early 80s era are interesting to say the least and his diaries were a source of material for a number of Dave Thomas books. Dave thought highly of Derek saying that 'the financial wizardry of Derek Gill had seen an insolvent club accumulate a bank balance that would have had even Jack Butterfield filled with admiration.' Derek,

who resigned as Director in 1985, was critical of final years of Lord's reign as Chairman including the so-called Lowerhouse Land deal. He was proud to be a director of the club he had worshipped since childhood. He left the club with huge regret even though he felt that he acted for the greater good of the club and not for personal gratification. A further quote from Dave: 'Gill had, in fact, worked miracles to get the Club solvent again but his good work simply went to waste.'

### Trust Officers

**Chairman**  
Peter Pike  
**Vice Chair**  
Terry Hephrun  
**Treasurer**  
Nigel Cotterill

**Secretary**  
Liam Hallinan  
**Membership Officer**  
Martin Barnes

**Board Members**  
Jane Pike  
Andy Tatchell  
Maggie Lishman

**Trust Corporate Members:**  
JD Wetherspoon  
Lancashire Telegraph  
UHY Hacker Young  
Moorhouse's Brewery



In the first of what hopefully will be a new newsletter feature, we asked a Trust member to write about their experiences. Here we hear from Trust member, and NNN podcast regular, **George Poole** as he shares how he is enjoying football in the Covid era:

As a university student since September 2019, my experience of watching football has changed drastically. After 15 years of watching Burnley at home and around a decade of following the Clarets away from home, both domestically and across Europe, I was now stuck behind a TV screen watching my beloved team. The tight budget and first year university life meant I was reduced to attending a couple of home games over the Christmas period and two away games until the curtailment of professional sport in March. This abstraction from football that I had experienced is now shared by all fans of football, due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Fans were not in Premier League stadiums from the beginning of March for nine months.

Since Project Restart and the resumption of professional football behind closed doors, we have had to resort to watching games from our homes, with the option given on whether to listen to the empty stadium, or the manufactured pipe-in of recorded crowd noise. I am sure you are now picturing the ball crashing into the side netting of the goal, while the crowd noise is played to the chorus of cheers and celebration, until the sound technician quickly realises

a goal has not in fact been scored! It has been a strange experience and perhaps not one we should get used to.

The well-known Claret, Alastair Campbell, recently said on the No Nay Never podcast that he hates the piped-in crowd noise, because he doesn't think 'we should allow ourselves to get accustomed to watching football without crowds'. On this point, I completely agree. While not going as far as Jock Stein in saying that 'football without fans is nothing', I certainly feel it has been severely affected. I currently feel disengaged with Burnley Football Club and disillusioned with the game of football. I miss football, but more than the action on the pitch: I miss travelling to the game; I miss the pints before and after games; I miss seeing the usual faces around me at the Turf; I miss getting up at 3a.m. to travel to Brighton on an Accy Clarets coach to watch a boring 0-0; I miss the one time in the week I can forget about all the worries of everyday life and enjoy myself with my dad and my mates. Football without fans is... different.

This disengagement with Burnley and football has been shared by many throughout this era of sport without live crowds, including 20-year-old Will

Lancaster, a regular at games both home and away: 'It just feels so alienated, almost like a reality TV programme that we are obligated to watch because of our links to the club.' He points to games he has watched as a neutral this season that would have been far better to watch with a crowd in the stadium, such as Bale's winner for Spurs on his return and Aston Villa's 7-2 pummeling of Liverpool.

There have been two main facets of Premier League football without fans, for myself at least, the emotional disengagement with watching Burnley and the disillusionment of watching games as a neutral. Rarely do I turn on the television and immediately go to see what football is on. I have not watched *Match of the Day* all season. Without the crowd creating an atmosphere, games have become heavily reliant on exciting football to draw enjoyment, due to the lack of intensity and excitement that a febrile atmosphere can bring. As for Burnley games, I am distanced from the friends and family that I usually watch

## **I feel disengaged with Burnley FC and disillusioned with the game of football**

with, mixed with the sub-par start to the season that the Clarets have made, it has led to a total emotional disengagement from watching the team.

We all watch the games, through whatever means necessary, but I think all of us can agree that it has simply not been the same. We should not get used to the idea of watching football without live crowds, and while the return of fans to Turf Moor may not be imminent, let us enjoy the return of live crowds elsewhere and the start of a return to normality that they may bring. It is not necessarily football that we are missing, but our own unique routines of following our beloved Clarets, whether that be travelling across the country with our friends or walking through Turnstile 32 with our dad to enter the James Hargreaves Stand. Football without fans has been different and the sooner we can see the safe return of fans to Turf Moor, the better.

# New deals for the Turf Moor seven

The Clarets Trust are delighted to see the recent contract extensions given to key members of Sean Dyche's squad, including Christmas rewards for Jack Cork and young Josh Benson.

Having put pen to paper on a new deal until 2023, including an extra 12-month option, Benson is one of seven Clarets to sign a new contract since the end of last season (joining McNeil, Westwood, Vydra, Rodriguez, Mee and Cork). Having faced fierce criticism from supporters in regard to the departures of certain players last summer, including stalwart Jeff Hendrick, the Trust is thrilled that the long-term future of the Burnley squad is being properly looked after.

While the contract extensions for Rodriguez, Vydra, Cork, Westwood and Mee

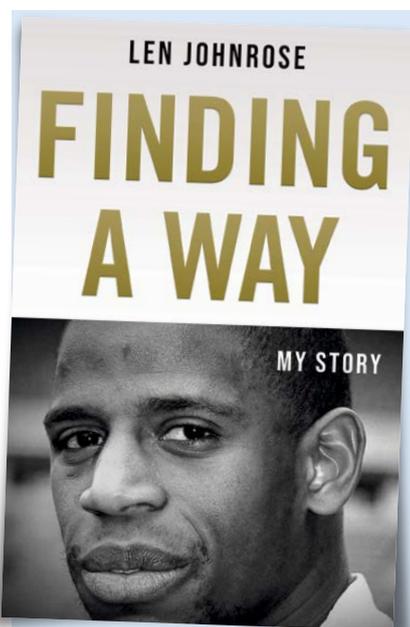
are all pleasing, the new deals for Benson and McNeil are perhaps most exciting. The two young prospects are evidence of the success of Dyche's long-term vision for the club.

With the money invested to recently achieve Category One Academy Status, alongside the renewed focus on youth recruitment, Benson and McNeil show that improvement to the first team does not necessarily have to come through expensive transfer dealing. Although it would be remiss to fail to mention the club's strategic announcement of McNeil's extension, coming on Deadline Day of a disappointing transfer window, the contracts signed by the club over the last six months indicate prolonged Premier League prosperity for the Clarets.

## Asset of Community Value – update

Trust members will know that the Trust has spearheaded ensuring the ground at Turf Moor is covered by an ACV – this means that if anything were to happen that we, the fans, would have an opportunity to buy the ground first. In light of all the chatter about takeover bids we emailed asking you to respond to a survey so that we could gauge support for a new application that would extend the ACV to include the whole of Turf Moor and the Barnfield Training Ground.

The results are in and Trust members feel this is worth pursuing as a resounding 98.6% of you said yes! Thanks for responding. We will keep you posted.



**We are delighted to announce that our newest honorary member will be former Burnley player Len Johnrose. His new book, *Finding a Way*, covers not only his playing career but his recent diagnosis of motor neurone disease. More information to come on our Facebook page and the next newsletter.**

## A lone seagull swoops into Turf Moor

Another summer transfer window has passed, and it is another without a major sale of a player for the Clarets. With that, we must be pleased. The summer was littered with rumours of the impending departure of the defensive colossus, James Tarkowski, yet he remains at the club, at least for now.

Perhaps the biggest talking point of the summer window was the failure to replace departures that, while not major sales, were indeed key members of Sean Dyche's squad. Jeff Hendrick (Newcastle), Joe Hart (Tottenham Hotspur), Adam Legzdins (Dundee) and Aaron Lennon (Kayserspor) all left the squad over the summer.

Hendrick and Lennon were the most notable departures, having been key assets to Dyche over the past few seasons, with 168 appearances for the club between them. Hendrick had once been Burnley's record signing upon joining the club in 2016 for £10.5 million. Over his time at the club, he helped the club retain their Premier League status and finish 7th in the 2017–18 season, en route to qualifying for the Europa League. Although he was often

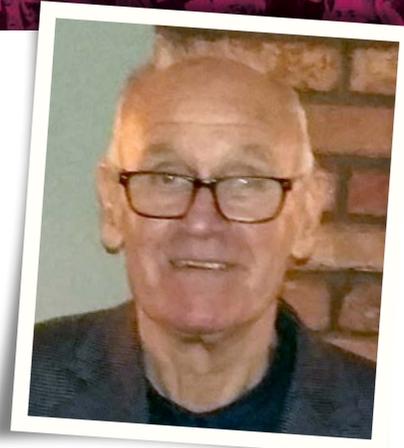
a whipping boy for fan complaints, he had been an integral member of Dyche's squad, operating both in the midfield and as a right winger when required.

Alongside the departure of the disillusioned Ben Gibson (Norwich, loan), this left the Clarets team depleted of three outfield squad members. Though Will Norris was brought in from Wolves to provide reinforcement in the goalkeeping department, only Dale Stephens was signed to bolster the outfield ranks. His arrival for a reported £1 million from league rivals Brighton & Hove Albion provides necessary backup in centre midfield, but with the budding relationship between the injury table and the pair of Robbie Brady and Jóhann Berg Gudmundsson, it is baffling to many supporters as to why such a pitiful amount of money was spent in the summer transfer window.

The Clarets squad has been left short of both quality and quantity, with a keen eye currently being kept on the recently announced club takeover that may allow Sean Dyche to enjoy a more fruitful January transfer window.

# Clarets legend Jimmy faces up to dementia

Trust members will be aware that Jimmy Robson, a member of our Championship winning team of 1960 is suffering from dementia. The issue of footballers and dementia is in the national news at the moment. Jimmy and his daughter, Dany, were interviewed recently by the *Daily Mail* who have kindly agreed for us to use that article.



Jimmy explained how for every goal-kick it was his job to flick the ball on, no matter how much it rattled his brain. 'I'd do what needed to be done,' he says in his softly-spoken North-East accent.

It is 60 years since Burnley won the First Division and Dany suspects her father's ability to recall details here is because of a trip to Turf Moor days ago.

'There was a big picture of the title-winning team in the *Burnley Express* in May,' Dany explains. 'Dad was asking us, "Am I on that?" There was no recognition. But when we took him to Turf Moor and showed him a picture of the team, he could name them all. Being there brought it all back for him. It was amazing.'

That is the power of reminiscence and why the PFA should be helping to fund and arrange social events where former professional players can come together, perhaps at their old stomping grounds. It triggers memories and days after his visit to Turf Moor it is heart-warming to hear Jimmy discuss his old friends – men he clearly held in high regard and misses.

Notably, he does not mind saying of Alzheimer's: 'It is a football disease.' The numbers back him up, too. Of the Burnley team who won the 1959–60 title, seven have been diagnosed with dementia. Six have passed away, including Jimmy McIlroy and Ray Pointer.

'Jimmy McIlroy was the best player we had,' says this wonderfully warm 81-year-old. 'He was top notch. He and Jimmy Adamson used to work wonderfully in the midfield. My job was to score goals. I played up front with Ray Pointer and we scored lots of goals. John Connelly, too. Burnley were a good side.'

Sometimes with dementia you either have to laugh or cry and one remark from her dad had Dany chuckling recently. Jimmy was asked about Sir



## Jimmy does not mind saying of Alzheimer's: 'It is a football disease.'

Bobby Charlton's diagnosis, the death of Nobby Stiles and the fact that many of his old Burnley team-mates had it. To which he replied: 'It makes me very sad because I might end up getting it, too.' Unfortunately, it is too late for that. Jimmy was diagnosed with dementia almost five years ago. It started with forgetting where he parked his car and escalated from there. Thankfully, Dany adds, her father is a 'happy' person. Whereas some of those diagnosed can develop nasty streaks, Jimmy has retained his cheeky nature.

'Burnley were playing Manchester City and it was by beating City in 1960 that Burnley won the title,' Dany says. 'So Sky Sports did an interview with my dad and Trevor Meredith talking about that time.

Trevor said my dad was always the joker.

'It was a worry that the dementia could turn him into something else but he's kept that side to him. We're lucky in that respect. We have a laugh. We try to keep it light because that's the type of family we are and the type of person my dad is. He is aware [that he has dementia].'

Following her dad's diagnosis, Dany spoke to the PFA who sent her a leaflet. 'That's it,' she says. 'It wasn't Alzheimer's specific so it didn't help a lot. But when I rang the Alzheimer's Society they sent me about 10 booklets about all the different types of dementia. They ring me once every couple of months to ask how my dad is and, nicely, they ask how we are as a family. That makes you feel as if somebody is looking out for you.'

Dany says money is not the top priority of families of former footballers diagnosed with dementia. What they want most is support, some recognition and for professional players nowadays to know the dangers of heading the ball.

'There's no cure for our dads,' she says. 'It's about getting help and raising awareness. It's about helping the generations to come. It's about having support. Dad was a footballer and you end up going to the Alzheimer's Society rather than football to help him.'

I ask Jimmy whether it saddens him, like it does us, to see so many footballing icons struggling with dementia, from Sir Bobby to himself. 'Bobby Charlton is an icon,' he replies. 'I am not an icon.' He turns to Dany and smiles. 'I've got my family here. They are very good to me. I'm doing all right.'

The Clarets Trust offer our best wishes to Jimmy and his family. We welcome the announcement to allow for additional substitutions in a game if someone has a suspected head injury – a vital change.

# No fans allowed at Turf Moor

Prior to lockdown, the Clarets Trust Board was disheartened to see that the majority of the North West of England was placed in tier 4, having previously been in tier 3.

This all means that attendance at Burnley matches at Turf Moor cannot be allowed. Only clubs who were in tiers 1 and 2 had been able to admit some fans – including the big London clubs until the Government announcement that moved them into the new tier 4.

Of course, with new strains of Covid and the recent introduction of another national lockdown, it is highly likely that the issue of opening games back up



**Turf Moor: empty for now**

will be reviewed yet again. Whatever happens we believe the previous system

to be unfair and are advocating that it must be the same for ALL Premier League Clubs. Not least given that fans in the North West have had life under Covid restrictions for longer than anywhere else in the country. If teams in this area cannot admit fans then no one should be able to do so.

It is, of course, worth noting that even if Burnley were to move down to tier 2, only 2000 fans would be allowed in. Burnley currently have about 6000 season ticket holders who would be eligible to apply for tickets as only those living in the Lancashire area can apply!

## Pay per view's own-goal

The Clarets Trust Board firmly believed the cost of the Pay Per View (PPV) matches was too expensive and penalised some Club Supporters more than others. We were delighted when this ill thought-out idea was ditched.

The Football Supporters' Association led a strong campaign fighting against this. We polled members to gauge opinions on PPV and it was clear that our initial

response on the Board was overwhelmingly shared among Trust members. It was interesting to look at the breakdown of your responses.

Nearly half said you would not watch them at all, and only 4% said you were happy to pay whereas over 20% said you would find alternative streams for those games.

It was fantastic to see that many BFC supporters – around 20% – chose instead to give their PPV money to the

local food bank, rather than to the TV companies. While it is hard to measure specific contributions, they have received over £37,000 since the start of the year, £15,000 since September, which is brilliant news at this difficult time of year.

Let us know if you did something other than PPV and which cause received your donation? Please email: [secretary@claretstrust.co.uk](mailto:secretary@claretstrust.co.uk) with your story.

## Emails, please

An urgent last call for email addresses. In addition to the Trust wishing to be environmentally friendly, increased postage costs mean sending newsletters out has become rather prohibitive. As a result, we have decided that if you wish to receive items by post it will cost £5 a year.

Please send us your email addresses to: [info@claretstrust.co.uk](mailto:info@claretstrust.co.uk)  
Thanks in advance,  
Martin Barnes, Membership Secretary

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## Lifetime membership offer

We're pleased to announce a special offer – 10% off lifetime membership.

For a limited period of time we're putting our lifetime membership rates into a January sale! If you go online you can get 10% off if you use the code CTLIFE10 at the checkout. Moving forward the Trust are planning 4 newsletters a year, developing a membership area of the website and more!

<https://claretstrust.co.uk/join-renew/>

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