

Hibs fans unite to buy club



A newly formed fans group called BuyHibs has announced its intention to unite fans with the aim of buying Hibernian FC.

The group, which will be headed by Hibernian legend Pat Stanton, is welcomed by the Hibernian Supporters Association, the Former Players Association and the Hibernian Shareholders Association who will be meeting with their members to discuss the best way to support the campaign.

The announcement follows open meetings with supporters and a comprehensive fan survey of over 4000 supporters carried out by Supporters Direct Scotland.

The survey revealed that 84% of supporters believed that it is time to look at fan ownership options and to seek a change of direction in the ownership of the club. 80% also stated that they believed Easter Road should be safeguarded as the future of the club and any change to that would require fan approval. 68% said that they would be willing to join a membership scheme to provide additional income for the club.

The BuyHibs campaign has also launched new website – www.buyhibs.org – where supporters can find out more about the group's proposals and pledge financial support. A Twitter presence has also been created – [@buyhibs](https://twitter.com/buyhibs) – and Facebook – [BuyHibs](https://www.facebook.com/BuyHibs) – to allow information to be shared and discussion to happen.

Pat Stanton said: "The BuyHibs campaign has the ultimate aim of buying our club. We are in the fortunate position that the motivation for BuyHibs has not been generated from an emergency situation through a threatened insolvency like supporters of other clubs have been faced with. We want to be

in a position where we can make a positive contribution to the long term position of our club and to be ready to buy the club when the opportunity arises. We are asking fans to pledge to provide funds which will allow BuyHibs to drive positive change, and to give an indication of what size of stake is achievable. We are open to work with all Hibernian minded people and groups who share the same goal.

“As a first step, we call on Sir Tom Farmer and Rod Petrie to meet with us to find and promote a positive and sustainable change for the betterment of Hibernian and to provide Sir Tom with a clear and deserved exit from the club he has backed for many years.”

Director of the BuyHibs campaign, Neil Wheelan said: “The club are failing on and off the park and the need for change has never been greater; the club needs a new direction with fresh drive and investment coming into the club. The potential within the Hibernian fanbase is enormous and this must be used to take the club forward.”

“The club needs sweeping changes to bring a new and more positive outlook and the required fresh investment. It would appear that the current custodians have no desire to invest to move the club forward so we call on Sir Tom Farmer to remain true to his word and pass the Football Club, Easter Road Stadium and the East Main Training Academy into a community backed vehicle that safeguards the future of all assets. In doing this it will allow Sir Tom Farmer to leave a legacy for the work that has been done during his time as custodian.”

“Greater fan involvement is a must as no one cares about their clubs as much as the supporters do. There also needs to be greater transparency and a greater focus on football. We want the Hibernian support to unite behind the drive to bring positive change and to get our club back where it should be. That will mean having a greater involvement and control over the running of our club. It is our club and our

responsibility.”

Andrew Jenkin, of Supporters Direct Scotland added: “Supporters are the heart and soul of any football club and the Buy Hibs campaign shows Hibernian have many passionate, knowledgeable and highly skilled supporters who would like to be further involved in the running of the club. Fan owned clubs are shown to have stronger ties with their communities, attract more sponsorship and encourage greater match day spending. Supporters Direct Scotland are pleased to support and assist the Buy Hibs campaign which potentially offers supporters a greater role in governance through democratic processes”.