



## **2013 AGM**

Birmingham City Supporters' Trust  
*'Blues Trust'*

**Supporting Candidate Statement**  
Margaret Decker

---

**Registered Office:**

Blues Supporters Society Limited, Cornwall Buildings, 45-51 Newhall Street, Birmingham, B3 3QR

**Mailing Address:**

Blues Trust, c/o Royal George Hotel Bar, Garrison Lane, Birmingham, B9 4PN



---

## **SUPPORTING CANDIDATE STATEMENT – MARGARET DECKER**

My name is Margaret Decker and I'm a Birmingham City season ticket holder. I'm very concerned about the current state of football in this country. It used to be called the people's game but it is being turned into an entertainment product for the rich. I believe that the best way to counteract this trend is for supporters to have more of a say in the way their clubs are run and that supporters' trusts are the best way to achieve this aim.

However, the existence of a supporters' trust does not guarantee anything; it has to be run in the right way. I believe that Blues Trust should aim to be a fit and proper supporters group. It should seek to exhibit the characteristics it would like to see in club owners. It should work for the long term good of the club, be transparent and not promise more than it can deliver. It should follow the best practice guidelines provided by Supporters Direct.

The rules of Blues Trust state that it is "to be conducted for the benefit of the community served by the club and not for the profit of its members" (Rule 3 Community Benefit Purpose). So building up the trust is not an end in itself but only a means to working for the good of the club and for the community associated with the club. Initially the trust concentrated on building its membership and I think that was the correct thing to do; you can't have a democratically elected board if there are no members to vote in the election. But I feel that the time has come for a new emphasis.

I believe that the trust needs to provide more information to Birmingham City fans about its aims and policies. These have to include the core principles on which supporters' trusts are founded, which are that supporters should be involved in the running of their clubs and that clubs should be run in a sustainable manner. Some Blues supporters will agree with these principles but they won't be popular with all; some fans want instant success rather than sustainability. I believe that it would be better to have a smaller number of members who really understand and agree with the aims of the trust than to have more members including some who don't understand what we stand for.

I believe that the trust should attempt to communicate with all the many different Birmingham City supporters' groups and to co-operate with them whenever possible. Obviously there are a small minority of fans that the trust wouldn't want to co-operate with; we can't be associated with anything illegal or that is not for the good of the club. But surely we should be able to find some points of agreement with most Birmingham City supporters' organisations!

The fan base is not united at the moment and it is probably unrealistic to expect other groups to affiliate with Blues Trust. We may need to find a different model for uniting fans such as a loose coalition that concentrates on what fans agree on rather than the things that divide us. It doesn't matter whether or not the trust is the biggest fans' group; what matters is that fans unite to work for the good of the club.

I was part of the steering group that helped to set up Blues Trust. I was willing to step in to fill gaps where needed: I served as interim treasurer and later as interim secretary. If elected to the board I believe that I could make a contribution to its work.

I also have the mental toughness necessary for the role. Whatever trust board members do they will receive criticism and ridicule from some quarters so it's not a job for the faint of heart. At the time of writing this, I'm involved in a project to distribute protest scarves in order to provide a non-violent way for Blues fans to express their support for the club and their frustration at the present situation. I don't know yet whether this is going to catch on or not; I could end up looking a fool. But I would rather try to do something and fail than to not try because I was worried about what other people might think of me.

I have a blog that is mainly about football and you can read more about my views there: <http://www.longlongroad.co.uk>.

