



THMT NEWS

Issue 2
April 2011

Your Trust, your Club

Welcome to April's edition of THMT News. The first edition issued last month has had a very positive response – we hope you found it informative and would encourage you pass it on friends, family, colleagues and especially prospective new members! Through the newsletter we'll be striving to keep you up-to-date with the Trust's activities in the months ahead. Remember, if you have anything that you'd like to say, any suggestions or any questions please contact us via e-mail, the website, Facebook or Twitter – we're easy to find!

On the park, from looking like title challengers only a few weeks ago, suddenly we are looking over our shoulders anxiously, hoping to maintain our play-off place – and we still have to play four matches away to Brechin and Livingston before the end of the season. While a much needed 3-1 win against Forfar has eased some of those concerns, the ease in which Livi have cantered to the Second Division title is undoubtedly disappointing.

As a result, it appears that apathy is rife amongst Ayr United supporters. Attendances are dropping fast. Weel kent faces that once occupied the terraces are disappearing and die-hards are finding other ways to

fill their Saturdays. This will also result in further financial difficulties for the Club unless this decline is arrested and the Clubs' fortunes turned around. In the current climate that won't be easy. In the past Lachlan Cameron has indicated a willingness to step aside but there are no 'white knights' riding to the rescue of Ayr United or any other Scottish clubs. If St.Mirren, an SPL club in a brand new stadium, with no debt, can't attract positive interest from an entrepreneur or businessman looking to invest – and are therefore looking at alternative avenues such as becoming a Community Interest Company – what chance is there of someone riding to help out Ayr United? Playing in the Second Division, with a stadium in dire need of investment and a debt in the region of £2m...

In days of yore, Ayr United supporters were vocal. Whether it be with praise or criticising the Club, at least they were vocal. It proved that we cared, that we had a passion for the Club – our Club. Today the silence is deafening and that can't be good news for Ayr United.

We need radical thoughts and concerted action from supporters to help turn around the Clubs fortunes. That's why we believe that a strong Trust is vital to the future of the Club. Now more than ever it is essential that as supporters you have a genuine voice; to have YOUR say in the future of YOUR club. Your membership of the Trust is a great start and if you've got ideas that could help the Trust – and the Club – please get in touch and get involved.

A Quid for the Kids

At the final home game of the league season versus Airdrie on 30th April, the Ayr United Under 17's will be presented with the SFL Youth League Championship Trophy. Sponsored by THMT, this squad have shown just how far the Ayr United Football Academy (AUFA), established by THMT, has come in the five years of its existence. The success of the AUFA is solely dependent upon the

Get in touch...

Website: www.thehonestmentrust.co.uk

Email: enquiries@thehonestmentrust.co.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/thmt

Twitter: twitter.com/Honestmentrust

The Honest Men Trust

c/o 15 Quail Road, Ayr, KA8 8LT

Ayr United Community Initiative – The Honest Men Trust.
Registered Industrial and Provident Society Reg. No. 2635 RS

finances that it can attract through sponsorship. THMT will continue to assist the AUFA in this area and we have written to the Club to ask for permission to launch a Quid for the Kids on the day of the match to maximise the profile of the AUFA. Subject to agreement from the Club, this will include a bucket collection on the day of the Airdrie match with ALL money raised going towards the AUFA coffers.



Help find the next Tiff!

We are looking for volunteers on the day to collect money from our fellow supporters for this very worthwhile cause. CAN YOU HELP? If you can give an hour of your time before the match for the next generation of Ayr United players, we'd love to hear from you. Contact us on enquiries@thehonestmentrust.co.uk

Irn-Bru Tops for Youth Teams

The Airdrie game is also the last match in which you'll be able to drop off any Irn-Bru (or other Barr's soft drink) bottle tops you've collected in support of the Ayr United Football Academy. Ayr currently sit 12th in the league table, with 1958 tops which could earn the Academy a £2,250 share of the £70,000 available to SFL clubs – unless you can help us move up the table!



Bottle tops can be dropped off at a number of locations around Ayr, including the Club Shop, until 7th May.

Club Relations

THMT are keen to help Ayr United in whatever way possible and to this end, we have spoken to Club officials to ask them how we can assist them next season. We will not be putting any money directly into the Club but are willing to look at areas where we can help in other ways. The Club have responded positively to our approach and will respond further once the Club Directors complete a re-assessment of the Clubs operations to discuss areas where we may be of assistance. We are open to ideas from our members as to how you think that THMT can help out. Also, if you'd be prepared to help out the Club in any way, using you own personal skills or knowledge, please get in touch and let us know. As usual, contact can be made via enquiries@thehonestmentrust.co.uk

Honest Man elected to Supporters Direct Scottish Council

THMT Board Member Neil Bone has been elected to the Scottish Council of Supporters Direct, the governing body of supporters trusts in Scotland.

Neil topped the poll in the recent ballot held by Supporters Direct to elect the five members of the new Scottish Council that will oversee the governance of the trust movement in Scotland and deal with specific Scottish issues surrounding the game in this country. His election at the head of the poll means that he will serve a three year term on the Scottish Council.

Neil stated, "I am delighted and honoured to have been elected to the Supporters Direct Scottish Council and I feel that my election is indicative of the respect that THMT have within the Trust movement across Scotland. The council is a genuine fans representative body, containing a wide spread of experience and knowledge. We will strive to promote sustainable football clubs, based on supporters' involvement & community ownership."

Neil, the former Secretary of THMT added "I want to ensure that this new Scottish Council hits the ground running and makes a palpable difference to the shared common goals of the Trust movement in

Scotland and promote the interests of supporters, whose voice until now has been consistently ignored by those who run the game.”

The other four members of the Scottish Council elected were Colin Pike (Berwick Rangers), Alistair Galloway (Clydebank), Greig Ingram (Aberdeen) and Michael Barile (Dundee United)

Trust call for Doncaster meeting

High on the agenda of the Scottish Council – and THMT – is the thorny issue of league construction. The SPL may have cancelled their planned vote this month, anticipating an answer they didn’t want, but change is still on the agenda.

Recently THMT board members John Dalton and Neil Bone were invited to attend an event organised by The Killie Trust at which SPL Chief Executive Neil Doncaster attempted to sell the proposals to the Killie faithful. It is safe to say that it failed miserably and indeed particularly for Clubs in similar situations to Ayr United, there were many more questions than answers. Not surprisingly, virtually every answer offered by Mr Doncaster involved finances.

At our recent THMT board meeting, it was agreed that we would write to Mr Doncaster and David Longmuir, Chief Executive of the SFL and invite them to express their views as to the affect the proposed changes would have on clubs like Ayr United and to address a meeting of football supporters. To date we have had no response from either party, however, on a recent edition of Beyond the SPL on Radio Scotland, Mr Doncaster confirmed that he had received requests to meet SFL clubs and that he was willing to do so.

We also wrote to Ayr United to ask them to express their views on the SPL plans and they have responded to concur with our own assessment that the SPL plans are ‘fluid’.

Following Neil Bone’s election to the Scottish Council of Supporters Direct, he will be actively pursuing this issue via that forum but should either the SFL or the SPL Chief Executives respond to our request, we will let you know.

The Honest Wheelies



The Honest Wheelies Travel Club was formed in 1990 to enable United's disabled supporters to travel to away matches and support their team. Run by Kenny and Marilyn Burgess it was supported by THMT, who ensured that there was a driver to take the Club to all away games across Scotland.

It has now been a number of years since the Wheelies have been able to travel to away matches due primarily to the lack of suitable transport. THMT are currently investigating the possibility of reforming the Wheelies to again get disabled supporters to away games, by seeking volunteer drivers; getting them through their MiDAS test, arranging the hiring of buses, etc. and we leafleted all supporters in the disabled section at a recent home match to gauge interest in the project. If you would be interested in travelling with the Wheelies in the future, know someone who would or could help out in any way, let us know: enquiries@thehonestmentrust.co.uk.

Mon the Vics!



In our last newsletter, we revealed that THMT have been involved in trying to secure the future of Ayr’s junior football club. Since then Whitlets Victoria’s future is beginning to look a bit brighter but there is still a long way to go. The Club have secured the use of Dam Park for the rest of the season and are currently negotiating a deal with South Ayrshire Council for use of the venue for next season but have a desire to return to their Whitlets home in future. As the Club stay on course to secure a place in the West Premier Division next season, THMT are involved drafting a new constitution and structure for the Club. So remember: not following United Away? Need Your Fix? Follow the Vics! Keep an eye on www.whitletsvictoria.com for fixture details.

Registered Address:
c/o 15 Quail Road, Ayr, KA8 8LT

Email: enquiries@thehonestmentrust.co.uk
Website: www.thehonestmentrust.co.uk



Membership Form

Please complete this form using BLOCK CAPITALS to become a member of **The Honest Men Trust**. Standing Order is the recommended way to pay your subscription, as it makes sure that your membership is always up to date and also keeps our administration costs down.

Full Name: _____
Address: _____

Post Code: _____
Telephone No: _____
Email address: _____
Date of Birth:* _____

* Under 16's are admitted as members free of charge, but will require to pay annual subscriptions once that age is achieved

- 1) Please enrol me as a member of The Ayr United Community Initiative Ltd. known as **The Honest Men Trust** for a period of 12 months.
- 2) I attach ****cash/ **cheque/ **postal order / **completed Standing Order Mandate** for my annual membership fee of £10. (** delete as appropriate).

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please make Cheques or Postal Orders payable to **The Honest Men Trust** and **return to:** Membership Secretary, The Honest Men Trust, c/o 15 Quail Road, Ayr, KA8 8LT.

Standing Order Mandate

TO Your Bank: _____
Address: _____

Post Code: _____

Please pay the sum of **£10.00 (Ten Pounds)** on the first day of _____ **2011** and **annually on that date thereafter** to the credit of **The Honest Men Trust**, Sort Code **82-60-30**, Account **30287660** at the Clydesdale Bank, 43 Alloway Street, Ayr, KA7 1SP and debit my account:

Sort Code: _____ Account Number: _____

until further notice, and this authority is to subsist until recalled by me in writing.

Signature: _____ Date: _____



Ayr United Community Initiative Ltd. – The Honest Men Trust
A Registered Industrial and Provident Society Reg. No. 2635 RS

Sponsors:
Ayr United Away Shirts (05/06)
West of Scotland Youth Leagues (2007-2010)
Ayr United Youth Academy U17s (08/09, 09/10) U19s (10/11)

