

Statement issued 08.07.15

Carlisle United Football Club and The United Trust are set to work together on the formation of an 'official' supporters' group which will bring a number of fan organisations together under one banner whilst allowing them to protect and maintain their own identity.

A number of supporter groups came together to spearhead a fundraising campaign for the renovation of the stadium floodlights last season and have committed to meet regularly to discuss further fundraising opportunities, commercial activities and event organisation with a view to bringing the fans closer to the club. The United Trust, who are seeking to undergo a rebranding exercise, will also engage in direct dialogue with the club to raise concerns, queries and to put forward proposals on behalf of their members.

Deputy managing director Suzanne Kidd said: "We met with a number of fan groups last season to talk about the formation of a single organisation and we're delighted that we are now in a position to drive things on.

"We welcome the formation of an official supporters' club and we will endeavour to support this initiative as much as we possibly can. The club sees huge benefits to be gained from linking with an 'official' supporters' group, and having the separate groups working together under one banner on agreed projects will only serve to benefit the club further."

United Trust board member Nigel Davidson said: "The United Trust is currently undertaking a rebranding exercise and has a new working name of the '**Carlisle United Official Supporters Club**' (CUOSC) (that is subject to membership ratification).

"The Trust is looking to generate a new image, to get supporters on board to increase the current membership in order to be as representative of the wider support as possible. This organisation is the best way for supporters to get their views heard in the boardroom at Carlisle United and the best way forward for all the supporters, the supporter groups and the club is to work together. Enrolling Season Ticket holders automatically into CUOSC will start to significantly build the numbers for the beginning of the season and demonstrates how well the club and CUOSC can work together.

"The Supporter groups (including to date TheCumbrians.net, Carlisle United Supporters' London Branch, Carlisle United Supporters Away Travel, the West Cumbrian Route 66 Blues Travel group and CUOSC) will collaborate on a number of commercial, social, travel and fund-raising projects throughout the season, whilst at the same time building relationships with supporters and stakeholders to ensure the group is as successful as possible in the future. They all worked together very successfully on the floodlight refurbishment raffle, which raised over £7,000 for the cause last season.

"Representatives from CUOSC will be taking part in a number of CUFC roadshows, to

promote the club, in the next few weeks. CUOSC will also be going on the road throughout Cumbria in the early part of the season to raise awareness and support for the rebranding of the supporters trust. These meetings will be an opportunity for supporters around the county and further afield to air their opinions face-to-face with representatives from CUOSC (and other supporter groups) and we all look forward to some lively debate over the course of the coming weeks.”

The proposal is as follows:

+ All season ticket holders (excluding minors) will be automatically enrolled as members of CUOSC (an opt-out option will be provided).

+ The club will recognise CUOSC members as full Members of Carlisle United Football Club and will grant the benefits associated with this membership.

+ The club and CUOSC will set up a committee representing both parties and will meet regularly to discuss areas where we can work together.

+ The club will provide regular updates and information for dissemination by CUOSC to their members, as they see fit.

+Joint roadshows, with representatives from the club and CUOSC in attendance, will be held for fans to attend - venues and timings to be confirmed in due course.

+The evenings will consist of a presentation followed by a Q&A session and an ‘open floor’ discussion where suggestions, concerns and ideas can be put forward and addressed.