

Shrimpers Trust statement following the UK General Election held on 4th July 2024.

The Shrimpers Trust would like to place on record its thanks to Anna Firth, the former Member of Parliament for Southend West and Leigh. Anna may have lost her seat, but the Trust believes her contribution in attempting to safeguard the future of Southend United Football Club, and lower and non-league football clubs in general through the Football Governance Bill Committee, should not be forgotten.

Having initially worked with the club's owner, Ron Martin, to help lift a winding-up petition served by HMRC, Anna quickly saw his true colours when the club was swiftly placed under a registration embargo for failing to meet further obligations to HMRC.

From that point on, supported and guided by her senior caseworker, Emrys Davies, she was fully engaged with listening to the views of supporters and gave up hours of time working with all parties involved in the negotiations for the consortium, COSU, to take control of the football club.

Anna worked tirelessly in lobbying for Southend United, regularly liaising with COSU, with the General Manager of the National League, Mark Ives, and with representatives of the Shrimpers Trust Board and the wider supporters' groups, and presenting our case to the sports minister, Stuart Andrew.

She also advocated for our club in Parliament, regularly referencing our belief that the past 25 years of ownership under Ron Martin should be used to demonstrate the necessity for an independent football regulator in the context of the Football Governance Bill, as well as the work of the Southend United Ex Players Association. Anna and Emrys will always be welcome at Roots Hall.

We would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate David Burton-Sampson, the incumbent MP for the constituency, and Bayo Alaba, who was elected to the neighbouring area of Southend East and Rochford.

The Shrimpers Trust is an apolitical organisation, and we have already met with both David and Bayo as well as seeking their views during the recent hustings hosted by our friends at Shrimperscast. We look forward to liaising closely with them both to further the cause of Southend United.

The Shrimpers Trust Board.