



# INVEST IN TRADITION - BUILD THE FUTURE

**HUNSLET RLFC, READY FOR THE NEXT ERA OF RUGBY LEAGUE**

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# Hunslet RLFC: A Message to Our Loyal Supporters

*“So We Shall Again...” – But To Do That, We Must Evolve.*

Dear Hunslet supporters,

By now you will have all seen that from 2026 we will be moving to a new single division structure below Super League. This offers a new beginning both for the sport and the Club and we need to embrace it quickly.

No club in rugby league has a heritage like ours. From Parkside to the Phoenix, our journey has always been defined by resilience, pride, and a deep bond with our community. You – the fans – brought this club back from the ashes. You kept the flame alive.

That’s why this message comes with respect and full transparency.

We are exploring a potential change in our ownership model – moving from fan ownership to bringing in a traditional individual investor / consortium model. We know this may raise concerns, but we believe this is the best – and perhaps only – way to give Hunslet the chance to grow, compete, and thrive long-term.

Here’s why we’re considering this change – and how we intend to protect what makes Hunslet special.





# 1. We Need Investment to Compete – Not Just Exist

The financial realities of modern rugby league are stark. Other clubs are benefitting from private investment that allows them to build squads, hire staff, and grow their infrastructure.

We are rightly proud of what fan ownership has achieved. But we are now at the point where our current structure limits our ambition.

To challenge at the highest level, develop local talent, and bring pride back to South Leeds, we need meaningful and sustained investment.

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## 2. This Is About Progress – Not Selling Out

We're not handing over Hunslet to someone who doesn't "get it." Any investor must share our values: local identity, community focus, and respect for the badge.

We are building in safeguards:

- **Fan representation on the board**
- **Golden share mechanisms** to protect the name, colours, and location
- **Long-term commitments** from any investor around funding and transparency

We're not looking to sell the soul of the Club, we're protecting it – by giving it the best chance to survive and succeed.

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# 3. The Game Is Changing – We Must Keep Up

## The Game Is Changing – We Must Keep Up

We've seen what happens when clubs stagnate – both on and off the pitch. If we don't adapt now, we risk sliding further behind. Other clubs are investing in professional setups, commercial growth, and digital fan engagement. We cannot afford to stand still.

This is about giving Hunslet:

- A competitive playing budget
- Improved matchday experience
- Long-term viability in a changing rugby league landscape

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**CHANGES  
AHEAD**



## 4. Fans Still Matter – Always

We will **never lose sight of who owns the Club in spirit: you.** The Hunslet faithful who've been there through thick and thin.

Even under a new model, we are committed to **keeping supporters at the heart of decisions.** Our community roots will not be torn up – they'll be strengthened.

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# Let's Talk – Together

We're not making this move behind closed doors. We'll hold open forums, share documents, and welcome input from members. No decision will be made without due diligence – and your voice will always be heard.

We believe in this Club. We believe in its fans. We believe that with the right support, Hunslet RLFC can, and will, rise again.

“So We Shall Again” isn't just a motto, It's our mission. This is how we make it possible.

With respect,

*Neil Hampshire*

CEO Hunslet RLFC

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# HUNSLET RLFC OWNERSHIP TRANSITION - SUPPORTERS FAQ

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# Why is the club considering moving away from fan ownership?

We've reached a point where the fan ownership model, while built on pride and passion, simply doesn't provide the financial backing we need to grow. To compete at the top end of the second tier and beyond, we need serious, sustained investment – for the squad, facilities, and infrastructure. Traditional fan fundraising alone can't deliver what's needed in the modern game.



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# Does this mean fans will lose all control of the club?

No. The aim is **not** to remove fans from the picture – it's to bring in a committed investor **alongside** clear protections for supporters. We plan to maintain:

- A **golden share** to protect our club's name, badge, colours, and location
- **Fan representation on the board** to ensure your voice continues to shape our future
- Regular **open communication** and transparency around key decisions



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# Why now? What's changed?

Other clubs below Super League are attracting significant private backing, giving them a competitive edge on and off the field. To avoid falling behind – and to fulfil our own ambitions – we need to act now while there is an opportunity to drive serious investor interest. Delay could cost us that opportunity.



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# Who is the investor – and do they understand the club's values?

This is the start. With your agreement we will actively seek out potential investors who understand Hunslet's heritage and identity.

We would not entertain a partner who didn't respect our culture, community, or long-term sustainability. Due diligence is key, and supporters will be fully informed before any final decision is made.



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# Is this just about spending more money on players?

No – it's about **stabilising and growing the club holistically**:

- Improving matchday experience at the South Leeds Stadium
- Investing in youth development and pathways
- Strengthening off-field operations (marketing, sponsorship, media)
- Building a long-term plan for performance and sustainability on and off the pitch



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# What happens to the current fan-owned shares?

The exact mechanism is still being discussed, but our goal is to transition the majority stake holding responsibly while protecting fans' investment and influence. There may be an option for a supporters' trust or similar body to retain a formal role in governance.



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# Are other clubs doing this?

Yes – many rugby league and football clubs that began with community ownership models have transitioned to hybrid or private structures, while still maintaining strong fan engagement and identity. The key is doing it right – with the right investor, right safeguards, and clear communication.



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# Will the club still be “ours”?

Yes. Ownership may evolve, **but Hunslet RLFC belongs to South Leeds and its people.** That doesn't change. What we're doing now is ensuring the club can not only survive but succeed – so we don't look back in 5 years and ask: “What if?”



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# Next Steps:

- We'll host fan forums in the coming months for open Q&A sessions
- We'll share a summary of investor terms once due diligence is complete
- Your feedback will help shape the final decision

what's  
next?

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# Final Word:

**“So We Shall Again”** isn’t just a phrase – it’s a belief in who we are, and who we can be again. With the right backing and the same passion from you, the fans, Hunslet RLFC can rise again – stronger, prouder, and more competitive than ever.

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