



# The Raith Trust

## News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

### STATEMENT IN REGARD TO POTENTIAL BUYOUT OF RAIITH ROVERS

As you may be aware on Monday evening 14 March 2005, at the AGM of Raith Rovers FC a hastily arranged announcement was made that current director Jimmy Miller was the preferred bidder to become the new owner of Raith Rovers FC.

The Raith Trust has issued a statement as follows,

“The history of single owners at Raith Rovers is not encouraging. Their shelf life seems limited and fans have invariably been glad to see the back of them. However recent changes have only lead to a repetition of the same cycle with exactly the same mistakes - unrealistic budgets leading to cash shortfalls. And yet when leaving, the people responsible for the mistakes want their money back.

Mr Miller would do well to study recent history and learn from these mistakes. If he completes the deal and wants the support of the community he needs to spell out his plans in some detail and engage with the community.

Whilst we welcome the departure of Mr McGowan, we remain to be convinced that this is not just another shuffle of the same cards. Unfortunately Rovers fans have seen this before and won't be blinded by a change which simply seeks to replace the present unpopular owners with a friend of some 20 years standing. The fans of Raith Rovers are looking for real change and for the club and community to come together. On the face of it this falls well short of their hopes.

We are disappointed to note that Mr Miller is reported as saying that he wouldn't welcome positive involvement from the supporters' trust, since the organisation represents over 30% of the club's hardcore support.

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We are also surprised that Mr. Miller is reported as not being aware of “what the Trust does”, especially in light of the high profile campaign which the trust is currently co-ordinating and because of our attempts to meet with him prior to Christmas.

Perhaps he is not aware that fans, through the trust, have contributed over £20,000 to the running of the club, a significant part of the Trust’s income, in the last three years. This is over and above the hundreds of thousands of pounds contributed by supporters through the turnstiles while they suffered some of the worst football ever to ‘grace’ Starks Park’s hallowed turf. Unlike the loans contributed by others this money is permanently invested in the club and isn’t available to be repaid over seven years.

The trust reiterates that this announcement will not deflect the ‘Reclaim the Rovers’ campaign for one second nor will it stop the trust from pursuing its core principles; namely influence and representation for all Raith Rovers supporters and greater involvement between the club and the community it represents. In this regard the trust reinforces that the door is open to anyone who wishes to discuss the future of Raith Rovers FC.

The ‘Reclaim the Rovers’ campaign is about the fundamental principles of running a football club in a town like Kirkcaldy. It is about a return to the values that the founding members of our club set in place over 100 years ago. It is about running the club in the best interests of the community as a whole rather than as a plaything for a few. It is about being inclusive not exclusive.

The landscape of Scottish football has changed dramatically over the past ten years and it is time for club owners to stop living in the past and repeating the same mistakes. A club like Raith Rovers must be a living, breathing part of the community and must build partnerships with the community and take advantage of the opportunities this presents.

This is what the ‘Reclaim the Rovers’ campaign stands for and the trust will continue to pursue this progressive agenda regardless of who owns the club next week, next month or next year. We concur with the fans of Barcelona, a club owned by its fans, when they say it is ‘more than just a football team’.

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The policy of the trust is driven, as always, by the thoughts of the supporters. Therefore a meeting of all trust members will be called within the next four weeks to allow for wider consultation and discussion of the situation. In the meantime we ask all fans to continue to contribute to the campaign and not to let a deal, which has yet to go through due diligence, and which was agreed a mere 15 minutes prior to a potentially awkward AGM, to detract from the path we have set ourselves on.”

Anyone wishing to make a donation to the campaign should make cheques payable to "The Raith Trust" and send to Freepost RLTS-AJGJ-YXZJ, Raith Trust, PO Box 26727, Kirkcaldy, Fife KY2 5WP (no stamp required), or go online at [www.raithtrust.org.uk](http://www.raithtrust.org.uk)

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**Notes to Editor:**

The Raith Trust is a democratic, not-for-profit supporters group constituted as an Industrial and Provident Society (i.e. a co-operative or mutual) which represents almost 400 Raith Rovers supporters. It is also one of the five largest shareholders in RRFC (Holdings) Ltd.

The Raith Trust is one of 29 similar Supporters' Trusts in Scotland and over 100 in the UK assisted nationally by Supporters Direct, the organisation tasked with assisting fans to play a responsible role in the life of their football club.

The trust's last meeting in November unanimously voted to pursue the concept of greater community ownership of Raith Rovers and tasked the trust board with fully exploring the options available.