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HENDON AND FINCHLEY EDITION

Fans vote to take charge of Hendon FC

SUPPORTERS of Hendon FC have united to take over their beloved club, which is on the brink of losing its owner and its ground.

More than 70 supporters voted unanimously in favour of setting up a supporters' trust to run the club at a meeting on Saturday. The Arbitrator Group wants to end its relationship with the club.

The future of the club has been on a knife edge following the death of chairman Ivor Arbitrator in July and the agreed sale of the club's ground at Claremont Road in Cricklewood to developers.

Plans to move to Cophall Stadium in Mill Hill rely on the sale of the Claremont Road site, but the sale has been stalled until a Lands Tribunal decides whether covenants on the site still prevent it being developed.

Dave Bedford, the club's vice-chairman, explained that people in the trust would own an equal share of the club. He said it would cost £100,000 a year to run the team, paid for by membership fees, donations and fundraising.

If the sale of the land goes through, the Arbitrator Group may give the supporters' trust £300,000, to pay for repairs needed to the stadium.

Simon Lawrence, who is one of the long-term supporters spearheading the takeover, said: "I'm excited and slightly scared. There's an awful lot ahead of us if we are going to keep this club going. We are going to need all the supporters to get behind us and donate whatever they can."