

Wanderers fans fear club are trying to close ranks

BLUES supporters fear the club will become an 'old school tie network' if proposals to slash the number of club shareholders goes through.

A confidential cover note from Wycombe Wanderers directors was sent out last weekend, with the club's 1994/1995 financial statement, outlining a motion to be raised at the their AGM on October 23.

Shareholders will vote on whether to reduce the limit for the number of shareholders from 500 to 250. They currently have

around 200. Bob Officer, a shareholder and chairman of the Independent Supporters' Club greeted it with alarm.

"If anything, they ought to be increasing the number of shareholders. Every fan ought to have the opportunity to be a shareholder in the club if that is possible," he said.

WWISC treasurer Ian Lewis said: "The only way to ensure that the club does not become an old school tie network is to involve as many true supporters who have Wycombe Wanderers at heart."

Shareholder Ian Blacklidge, 33, of West Wycombe Road, said: "The directors have encouraged people to get involved in the past.

"They have always encouraged people, saying it would be nice to have a lot of shareholders. Why are they changing that now?"

Club bosses were furious to hear that the news of the motion had been leaked. Chairman Ivor Beeks said: "I believe it is a matter for discussion at the shareholders' meeting. It is not something which should be discussed in public."

The club's financial statements show that it has fallen in value by £146,301 to £4,072,632 over the year ending April 1995. Gate figures for this season are down compared to last year.

But financial director Graham Peart remained fairly optimistic about the season ahead and blamed the club's fall in value on several recent player transfers into the squad.

He added: "The club is still in a healthy situation, with cash in hand at the end of last season."