

Financial director invites the fans in

DIRECTOR Graham Peart has told supporters the door is open if they want to follow Northampton fans' lead and try and buy their way into the boardroom.

He says the board would listen to fans who took advantage of the new government-backed Supporters Direct Scheme and pooled their resources to form a trust to buy a way in.

The Supporters Direct scheme offers fans advice, support, modest start up costs and preferential banking packages to help give supporters a say in the running of their clubs.

Peart said: "I'm happy to have supporter involvement. My view is that it'd be a good thing to have wider ownership. We'd consider anything that would secure

the club's long term future.

But he added: "We've got supporters on the board at the moment. I'd take exception if someone said I or the other directors weren't supporters. None of us take any money out of the club."

Peart has also promised the club's 400-odd members and staff that they will be consulted as the takeover talks continue before it is put to a vote."

But he warned members that, unlike in company or building society takeovers, voting to change the constitution is designed to make the club rich, not them.

He said: "There won't be any payouts. They'll lose their £1 fee and they'd lose their vote in future. They'd have no further interest in the foundation of the club."

Baird doubtful as Bees promise an Exeter backlash

TOMORROW'S opponents Brentford have warned Wanderers to expect a backlash after the Bees were knocked out of the Auto Windscreen Shield by Exeter on Tuesday.

Coach Ray Lewington said the club's chairman/manager Ron Noades blew his top and is demanding an instant response.

Lewington said: "Ron was as angry as I've seen him. The competition gave us a real chance of going to Wembley and there will be a reaction against Wycombe."

The angry Bees have double reason to want to make the game count. It was meant to be a police-free fixture but, because of crowd trouble at their last home match against Notts County, the police are insisting on being there

and are charging Brentford £3,000 for the privilege.

On the field Brentford also have problems. Striker Scott Partridge is out while partner Lloyd Owusu is doubtful along with £250,000 defender Scott Marshall, while midfielder Paul Evans is suspended.

But the Bees have plenty in reserve. If Owusu doesn't make it, on-loan Steve Jones could partner Italian Lorenzo Pinamonte up front with former Wanderer Martin Rowlands behind. Robert Quinn is available for a midfield or defensive berth after his ban while Carl Hutchings, back on loan, is in line to make his 200th Brentford appearance.

Blues have their own problems. Andy Baird

has not trained all week and is seeing a chiropractor today after injuring his neck against Oxford. He is unlikely to make it, which could mean midfielder Keith Ryan being pushed into a striking role for the second time this season. Richard Thompson is another option, but Sanchez, bearing the opposition in mind, is keen to have a physical presence up front.

Jermaine McSparran could return to the subs bench despite only resuming full training yesterday following his appendix operation.

Dave Carroll (pelvis), is also short on fitness. He hasn't trained for two weeks and Sanchez felt it showed last week but Carroll should stay as Sanchez is keen to go with experience until the Blues are safe.