

Campaign led by Wanderers

Blues boss writes to MP urging action against ITV giants

W Y C O M B E
WANDERERS are leading the way in the fight to receive money they believe are owed to league clubs by ITV giants Carlton and Granada.

Blues chairman Ivor Beeks, who is one of the eight members on the League Management Committee, has written to Wycombe MP Paul Goodman, urging him to press the league clubs' case to the Government over ITV Digital.

The company went into administration in May, without paying the league clubs millions of pounds from a three-year deal.

And league clubs are now taking Carlton and Granada,

JOE SLADE

FOOTBALL

who set up ITV Digital, to court to recover the money they believe is owed to them.

Beeks said: "All Football League club chairmen are launching a campaign to ensure these companies honour their agreements with the Football League involving money expected to be received, but for which Carlton and Granada currently refuse to admit responsibility.

And Goodman is writing to Tessa Jowell, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport to press the club's case.

Goodman said: "Wycombe Wanderers make a valuable

financial and social contribution to life in Wycombe. That's absolutely true and was demonstrated par excellence last season during Wycombe's superb cup run.

"If Wycombe Wanderers are worried, which they are along with other clubs, then it's my duty to bring that up, so I'm writing to raise his concerns with Tessa Jowell."

Beeks is pressing for a meeting with Goodman to outline Wycombe's - and the league's - case.

And Goodman is willing to meet with Beeks, having written to him in May about the ITV Digital crisis.

He said: "I've already asked for a meeting to take place and will be doing so again."

Meanwhile, the Football Fans Union's campaign against Granada and Carlton is hotting for the World Cup Final on Sunday.

The Can the Commercials campaign urges football fans to boycott ITV and watch the BBC as the channels go head-to-head for the final game of the tournament.

Previous clashes, when England played Denmark and the England-Brazil clash, have resulted in a big win for the BBC, who had a viewing share of more than 75 per cent.

Alex Burnmaster, campaigns director of the union said: "The final provides a perfect opportunity to show Carlton and Granada that they cannot renege on their obligations to

football clubs up and down the country."

But a spokesman for Carlton said the company did not owe any money to the league clubs.

He said: "The deal was with ITV Digital which is now in administration. There's no legal obligation.

"We have sympathy for the league clubs but from the company's point of view, our first priority must be with the shareholders and employees."

And the spokesman said it was difficult to say whether the fans' boycott has had any effect on viewing figures.

He said: "BBC always have the larger share so it's difficult to know. It's also difficult because the way the figures are audited has recently changed."