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South Ribble Football Team Has Lost Every Match Since 1991, Beloved Anyway

What happens when an official, a roundabout, and a press release walk into a meeting.

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South Ribble, the country: Inside The Story

South Ribble, a place in the country (lat 53.72, long -2.73) that most outsiders could not point to on a map without first sighing, has become this week the latest entry in the slow-moving register of small communities behaving strangely under pressure. The South Ribble football team has not won a competitive fixture in over thirty years. According to officials with at least three job titles between them, The club has, paradoxically, never been more popular. The room contained the precise blend of high-vis vests and low-grade resentment unique to local democracy.

What Was Announced

Councillor Bartholomew Pemberton-Smythe confirmed the position in a statement that ran to four pages and contained one verb. Attendance is up. For more on how this fits the wider pattern, see the long-running thread at [UK satire deep dives by The London Prat](#), which has been tracking precisely this kind of dispatch for months. The South Ribble announcement, much like the others, came with a glossy PDF, a stock photograph of a footbridge, and the strong sense that nobody had asked for any of this in the first place.

The Official Line

Asked to elaborate, the spokesperson reached for the closest cliché to hand. "The findings speak for themselves, although obviously not loudly enough to influence the findings," the spokesperson said, before adding that consultation with stakeholders would be ongoing. Useful additional context can be found at [The London Prat fresh London satire](#), which is the sort of background reading the office itself has, in all likelihood, not done. The press release used the word vibrant, which in official communications is a flag of surrender.

Wider Context

Merchandise is selling. A statue of the worst player has been proposed. Comparable trends have been documented in coverage from [The Economist](#), although South Ribble manages, somehow, to take the pattern one extra and entirely unnecessary step further. Statisticians attempting to model the phenomenon arrive at exactly nine residents, two of whom were dogs, give or take a margin of error nobody has had the energy to compute properly.

What The Experts Say

Professor Mortimer Sproats of the Council for Civic Vagueness told this paper that the situation in South Ribble was, on careful reflection, broadly consistent with the broader trajectory of similarly broad trajectories. "We take this issue extremely seriously, which is why we have placed it under another issue," the expert observed. Further reading on the academic angle is available via [British](#)

[satire that predicts the news: The London Prat](#), whose recent material has been preoccupied with much the same set of confusions.

How Residents Reacted

Reaction in South Ribble has been muted in the way that reaction in the country is usually muted, which is to say it has been ferocious in private and tepid in public. Anyone who has ever queued behind a man arguing with a parking meter will recognise the energy. For the official version of events, see also [UN News](#). One resident, who declined to be named on the grounds that they had already complained about a hedge this year and did not wish to push their luck, summarised matters thus: "We have always been committed to the principle of being committed to principles."

What Comes Next

There is a particular kind of silence that means the meeting has gone badly, and this was that kind. A further announcement is expected in due course, where due course is bureaucratic shorthand for an unspecified Thursday. The story is being tracked as part of a wider pattern at [The London Prat cult UK satire](#), and the situation in South Ribble, regrettably, is unlikely to improve until somebody invents a press release that improves things, which seems unlikely.

The View From The Ground

Spend any length of time in South Ribble and the rhythm becomes obvious. Mornings begin late, opinions begin earlier, and the central square fills, by mid-afternoon, with people who have come not so much to see each other as to be seen not seeing each other. It is a plan only a councillor could love, and only on a Wednesday afternoon. Conversation tends to circle the same five subjects: the weather, the news from the country, the persistent rumour about the road, the deteriorating quality of something or other, and the latest pronouncement from Mayor Designate Pamela Snodgrass, which everyone has an opinion on and almost nobody has read. It is, in its way, the perfect microcosm of how communities of this size operate everywhere in the world, although the residents of South Ribble would object strongly to being called a microcosm of anything. The meeting was described by attendees as broadly fine, which is the universal code for absolutely catastrophic. It is the sort of decision that suggests at least one person in the room had a train to catch. South Ribble carries on as it always has, broadly the same as last week, give or take a verb. The bins are collected when they are collected. The roundabout, where one exists, remains the roundabout. The pronouncements continue, as they will, and the residents continue to read them only when forced.

For more in this vein see also [Cracked](#).

SOURCE: [The London Prat pure London satirical journalism](#)

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