

AFC Wimbledon Club Charter

AFC Wimbledon is a club collectively created, owned and run by its fans. In everything we do, we strive to provide the very best football club we can, recognising that were it not for our fans we would not be here - and without them, there would be no point being here anyway.

As fans ourselves we extend a welcome to all our visitors, which we hope is reciprocated when we visit other clubs. Opposition fans will have a different view of the match and hope for a different result, but both sets of supporters are united as football fans who have made sacrifices to support their clubs, and the commitment of all fans is recognised by AFC Wimbledon.

CLUB OBJECTIVES FOR SEASON 2016/17

1. To build on our status in reaching League 1 of the English Football League while maintaining our prudent approach to operating the club.
2. To make substantial progress towards a new stadium.
3. To provide facilities and other assistance as necessary to support the AFC Wimbledon Foundation in increasing the range and quantity of the community work it carries out.
4. To continue to make improvements to the matchday experience of all fans visiting our stadium and be awarded the Family Excellence Award for the third successive season.

CUSTOMER SERVICES

The Club Secretary and Operations Director, David Charles, is the club's principal customer services contact. He is also the club's Supporter Liaison Officer and the role is not only to act as a point of contact for supporters but also to deliver the club's policy with regards to its stakeholders in so far as that policy concerns supporters and to liaise with the club's management with regard to supporter issue.

He can generally be contacted Monday to Friday between 9.30 am and 5.00 pm at:

AFC Wimbledon
The Cherry Red Records Stadium
Jack Goodchild Way
422a Kingston Road
Kingston upon Thames
Surrey
KT1 3PB

Email: secretary@afcwimbledon.co.uk

Tel: 020 8547 3528

Fax: 0808 280 0816

We welcome feedback on all aspects of what we do. Comments can be made by phoning the above number during normal weekday office hours, in writing to the club at the above address, or by email to info@afcwimbledon.co.uk.

If you wish to make a formal complaint about any issue, then it must be by post or by email; we will acknowledge your complaint within five working days, by the same means as you contact us unless you ask us to do otherwise.

That acknowledgement will tell you what we will do next, and may ask for further information to help us get to the bottom of things as quickly as possible. We will endeavour to respond to complaints in full within 10 working days of the acknowledgement (i.e. within 15 days of your initial contact); if there are reasons why this timescale cannot be met, such as staff absence, we will inform you of a revised timescale; in all cases, we will send you a formal response within 20 working days of the initial contact.

Any complaint received will be recorded in a register held by the club and, if required, will be forwarded to the relevant football authority together with a report of the investigation into the complaint.

It is hoped and expected that any complaints received by the club about customer service can be resolved to the complainant's satisfaction - and the club will make every effort to do so.

However, if this is not possible, supporters can now refer the matter directly to the Independent Football Ombudsman (IFO) using the following details:

The Independent Football Ombudsman
Suite 49
33 Great George Street
Leeds
LS1 3AJ

Email: contact@theifo.co.net

Tel: 0800 588 4066.

As a club, we would also be happy for the matter to be referred to the Football Supporters' Federation and/or Supporters Direct, but only with the complainant's permission.

STAFF CONDUCT

All staff, both employees and volunteers, will endeavour to be courteous and helpful to supporters and customers at all times, offering them the best service and information available at the given time.

Our club is built on, and depends on, the support of hundreds of volunteers, all of whom are fans who sacrifice their time and enjoyment to help the club. This makes the club what it is and what we enjoy and love.

We endeavour to ensure that these volunteers represent the club and help their fellow fans as professionally as possible, but we ask all our supporters and visitors to respect their

commitment and to understand that at any given time, despite our best efforts, not every volunteer will have the answer to every query.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

We respect and value the diversity that exists in our communities and are committed to challenging attitudes that promote discrimination.

The club is an equal opportunities employer and has a staff equal opportunities policy: in pursuit of our aims and objectives, we will not discriminate against, or in any way treat less favourably, any person on the grounds of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual identity, or political or religious belief.

The club will not tolerate any discriminatory behaviour on these grounds, whether physical or verbal, by its own employees, volunteers or fans, or by visitors, in the vicinity of the stadium. Whenever such behaviour is brought to the club's attention, the club will act robustly in taking appropriate disciplinary action.

SAFEGUARDING

All children and vulnerable adults are valued guests of the club, and the club takes its responsibilities to them seriously.

All club staff and volunteers involved in work with young people will have been approved for that work following all the necessary checks, and will have been selected for that work following a rigorous interview in which their competence for their role has been demonstrated.

SUPPORTER CONTROL AND CONSULTATION

The club's majority shareholder is the Dons Trust, an Industrial and Provident Society registered with the Financial Services Authority. The Trust's position as the owner of the club - and thus the role of our fans as owners - is safeguarded under the club's and Trust's constitution.

As a result, all significant decisions about the future of the club - the club's name, the stadium and the Trust's ownership role - must be agreed by members of the Trust.

Trust members elect the Dons Trust board, which is responsible for agreeing the strategic direction of the club and Trust as well as monitoring the implementation of that strategy by the club.

The views of the fans are collected in several ways:

- * By holding at least three special general meetings a year to consider matters of interest to the members and to obtain their feedback on relevant issues
- * By ad hoc exercises, such as the 2010 survey of interested parties about the location of any new stadium that might be built
- * Informally - directors are available and visible on matchdays for fans to offer their views

In addition to the above, the club communicates with fans on matchdays when circumstances require, and also through its official website, Twitter and other media channels.

TICKETING

We hope that the club's detailed ticketing policy, set out on the ticketing section of the official website, will answer the great majority of queries relating to season tickets.

The club has introduced various ways to make it easier for supporters to pay for season tickets, including by direct debit.

For matches which are arranged at short notice or are all-ticket, the club will publicise the arrangements for buying tickets in the 'News' section of the official website.

Tickets sold in advance, for example by online sales, will be mailed to fans up until about four days before the game. After that time they will be held for collection on the day of the game at the complimentary tickets window. Tickets are mailed at the recipient's risk, unless recorded delivery is requested, in which case a small additional fee will be charged.

Entitlement to tickets for home FA Cup, League Cup, Johnstone's Paint Trophy and playoff games

Season ticket holders will be allocated, on application, one ticket only for each home FA Cup, League Cup, Johnstone's Paint Trophy or playoff game, at the price advertised, provided the application received is in accordance with advertised instructions published on the official website, in the matchday programme and/or in the local press. Where possible, season ticket holders will be allocated their usual seat or terrace.

Season ticket holders will, where possible, be given time to make preferential applications before tickets go on general sale. Subsequently, tickets will be available on a first-come, first-served basis, except that the club reserves the right to retain some tickets for allocation to playing staff and volunteers.

Entitlement to preference for tickets to away games

When we are asked to sell tickets for an away game, season ticket holders will be given preference on applications at the rate of one per season ticket where possible, but no guarantee of allocation can be given in cases where the number of applications from season ticket holders exceeds the number of tickets issued to AFC Wimbledon by the home team. The club reserves the right to set aside some such away tickets for volunteers and players. When we are selling tickets to a restricted access away game, full details will be published on the official website, in the matchday programme and/or in the local press.

Refunds on season tickets

Refunds on season tickets will not normally be made. Refunds on tickets for specific matches will be at the discretion of the club.

Before every league game, season ticket holders will be invited to return unwanted ticket coupons so that their seat or terrace ticket may be resold. Fans are requested to make these

returns as a donation to the club, but they may, if they wish, request a refund of an appropriate proportion of their season ticket. This request may be granted by the club if the ticket appears likely to be resold.

Away fans

The club abides by Football League and Football Association regulations governing the allocation and pricing of tickets to visiting clubs.

The club will not charge admission prices to supporters of a visiting club which are higher than those charged to our own supporters for comparable accommodation.

Concessionary rates offered to our own supporters who are over 65, students or under 16 also apply to supporters of a visiting club. We reserve the right to charge normal adult matchday admission prices in the absence of proof of qualifying for a concessionary rate.

Disabled fans

There are four areas in the stadium set aside for disabled fans, including wheelchair users. Disabled fans pay the normal ticket price for the area of the ground where they will be accommodated, depending on their age. A personal assistant accompanying a disabled fan will be admitted to the stadium free of charge. Further information on disabled access may be obtained from the club office.

Policy on abandoned games

In the event that a game is abandoned before half-time, paying spectators will be entitled to either entry to the rearranged game at no expense or a full refund. If a game is abandoned after half-time there will be no recompense.

OUR STADIUM

The stadium is covered by legislation governing sports grounds and is licensed under the Football Spectators Act 1989. The award of this licence demonstrates that fans can have confidence that they can attend matches at the stadium in safety. In addition, the club is bound by the national ground regulations promoted by the Football League, which are displayed at entry points to the stadium.

As well as adhering to the statutory and compulsory guidelines, we take pride in operating a safe, clean and pleasant facility, run by volunteers and employees, in order to provide a great place to watch football.

We will act robustly to protect those employees and volunteers from any harassment they may suffer, and to protect the good name of the club from any behaviour by our supporters or by visitors which contravenes the generally accepted standards for a modern football environment, particularly with regard to discriminatory or hate speech.

If the club becomes aware of any person having been convicted of or involved directly in a football related offence, whether at the club's ground or elsewhere, or having been in serious breach of any club's ground regulations, it will, in consultation with the relevant

police authority and representatives of the Dons Trust, make a decision as to whether that person should become subject to a club ban.

Each case will be judged on its own merits. The length of any ban will depend on the severity of the offence and/or the breach of the club's ground regulations. Details of the procedure are contained in the match day programme and can be requested from the Club Secretary.

We seek to be as good a neighbour as we can, so we urge all our fans and visitors to respect those who live and work near the stadium, and to remember that - especially on matchdays - our fans are ambassadors of the club, and all fans, home and away, are ambassadors for our sport.

OUR MERCHANDISE

The club shop is open on Saturday matchdays from 12.15 pm until 2.45 pm and after the match until 5.30 pm.

On midweek matchdays it is open from 6.00 pm until 7.30 pm. The shop may also open on other special occasions, and if so the opening times will be advertised on the official website and in the matchday programme. We also have an online store accessible through the official website.

The club changes both its home and away kits every other year, and its third kit is changed in the intervening year, subject to the kit suppliers and shirt sponsors remaining unchanged.

The launch date of new kit to be sold in the club shop will be advertised in the shop, on the official website and in the matchday programme. Shop staff will personally inform customers of the launch date, especially when it is imminent.

Any customer who is unhappy with any item purchased from the club shop can return that item and will receive a full refund on production of a receipt, provided the item is returned within 28 days of purchase. In accordance with our legal obligations, we offer refunds on items of clothing only if they are returned unsoiled.

All feedback or complaints about the club shop or club merchandise should be submitted according to the procedure set out in the earlier section 'Customer Service'.

DATA PROTECTION

The club is a data holder under the terms of the Data Protection Act, and keeps on file data from all transactions. That data is held securely and privately, accessible only to certain of the club's employees and volunteers, and they are aware of the club's responsibility to safeguard that information.

Breach of this policy by any employee or volunteer will be deemed a serious offence, with appropriate penalties.

We undertake to use the data we hold on our fans and other customers sensitively and to share it only with partner organisations whom we believe would meet the general approval of our supporters.

Should anyone wish to have their details removed from our database, or not to have their contact details passed on to partner organisations, we will see that their wishes are carried out immediately upon receiving written instructions.

PARKING

Parking is available at no cost on a first-come, first-served basis. Reserved parking spaces for officials and players are clearly marked.

A total of 32 spaces are available for disabled parking for home or away fans. The spaces can be either for fans with a blue badge or for any home fans who have been issued with one of our own badges. While these spaces are reserved for disabled badge holders, the number of would-be users exceeds the number of spaces, and we encourage early arrival.

Free parking is available in nearby streets. Fans are urged to park responsibly and with consideration for local residents.

A limited number of bicycle racks are also available.

CATERING FACILITIES AND HOSPITALITY

On matchdays a number of food outlets both inside and outside the ground sell a variety of hot and cold food and drinks.

There is also a hospitality area, seating 100 people, offering pre-match three-course meals. Fans who wish to reserve a place should contact commercial@afcwimbledon.co.uk.

The stadium has two large bars which open on Saturday matchdays from noon. Away fans will sometimes be admitted to these bars; if so, this will be announced on the official website before the match takes place.

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

The club's various community activities have recently been consolidated into a charity, The AFC Wimbledon Foundation. The charity carries out activities under the following headings:

- Social inclusion
- Sports participation
- Health
- Education

Of particular interest to many fans are the courses that give children between the ages of 4 and 16 the opportunity to play football in a safe learning environment. The courses are ideal for young players to develop their confidence and talent under the guidance of experienced FA qualified coaches in sessions that ensure maximum levels of improvement and enjoyment.

Players who show potential may be invited to attend our Advanced Coaching Programme, while players of outstanding ability could be invited to train with the club's youth teams.