

## **Additional questions that have been raised during the consultation period (part 2)**

The following are additional questions that were raised at the second consultation meeting held at Kingsmeadow Stadium on Monday 11 June, following the original meeting and consultation period.

### **How can we ever move back to Wimbledon?**

This is a difficult question but one of course we hope will not be insurmountable. The two obvious problems are:

- identifying a site for a club of our size for a stadium that meets our ambitions and;
- the cost of building such a stadium

We continue to work with Merton Council on potential sites and they continue to be very supportive.

When it comes to raising the capital to finance a project, the majority of the funds we need will have to come from some sort of enabling development. An enabling development is one where in our case a football stadium would make up part of the development of an area, with the developer making money from the sale of other parts of a site for things such as housing or retail for which permission couldn't have been obtained without also building a football stadium. Some of the profit from the housing, retail etc. would be diverted to enable a stadium (or part of a stadium) to be built

### **Can we raise money by selling Kingsmeadow?**

The site is subject to restrictions on development, as it is built on Metropolitan Open Land (effectively this is the equivalent of the green belt within the inner city) so we would probably only be able to raise money by selling Kingsmeadow for continued use as a stadium – and there is a very limited market for that sort of deal.

### **What agreement does Kingstonian currently have to play at Kingsmeadow?**

When we acquired the perimeter lease from the council two or three years ago we did so at no cost but, in return, we agreed with Kingston Council that Kingstonian could continue to play at the ground at no charge for the next 10 years. At the end of these 10 years the agreement continues but Kingstonian will need to pay an annual rent to play.

### **What about using our talented supporter base for ideas? Including those who work in investment?**

The purpose of this consultation period is to communicate the issues we face to a wider audience of AFC Wimbledon supporters and get feedback from fans with ideas that might help. We are very aware that our supporter community comprises a wide cross section of backgrounds and that some supporters work in the financial and investment sector. We have already benefited from substantial advice from supporters, for which we are extremely grateful, but we continue to be open for more ideas. In practice a few fans have approached us with ideas and we will be meeting them to see how viable these ideas are. If you have ideas we would be very pleased to hear from you.

**What happens if we got relegated and had already embarked on improvements to the stadium?**

We will not embark on a project that the Club can't afford if it means jeopardising the supporter ownership principles on which we are built.

We would want any scheme to raise finance to be flexible to the circumstances of the Club but one way or another if we wish to remain a Football League team we will have to find a way to meet the criteria. Whether that is at Kingsmeadow or elsewhere we will no doubt need investment to achieve that.

**Would you consider offering non-financial benefits as part of any funding?**

This is definitely something to think about. As we have already found from the meetings and consultation questions, people invest and put money into things for different reasons. Whilst the primary focus will be on a proposal that financially adds up and is fair to investors, it would be silly to close the door on anything that is going to help us raise the money we need for capital investment, so long as it doesn't jeopardise the inclusiveness of the Club to every supporter, rich or poor.

**The original FAQs were quite vague about a target figure to be raised, and showed a big range – this can lead to being a disincentive?**

This is a good point. When we first drafted the FAQs we were at an early stage in our assessment of likely costs and needs. Also, we wanted to tell fans about the scale of the work we need to do. As a result, the target figure was set at £1m - £2m to allow us to remain flexible. We are still working on the cost of certain projects such as the East Stand but we are gradually getting more accurate answers that we can include in a final proposal.

We could have waited for more detailed costs before embarking on the consultation but we wanted to get these issues out into the public domain to be debated, so that the DT Board had a good steer as to the way supporters were thinking.

Ultimately, when we decide to raise the money we will by then be very clear on what we need money for, how much we need, and by what date.

**Can organisations and enterprises invest in any scheme and, if so, on what terms?**

In theory there is no reason why an organisation couldn't become a member of the Dons Trust and invest money into a community shares scheme. In fact if we were able to find other Community Benefit Societies willing to invest they could invest more than the £20,000 limit. There would be a few things to consider such as whether we were competing for the same money, for example local businesses and sponsorship opportunities, and whether the DT wanted to actively pursue businesses as members and investors.

If we were talking about organisations investing in ways other than a community share offer then there is a whole new range of issues, mainly around whether this money was going to detract from or put at risk the values and principles of Supporter ownership. But if investment could be obtained on similar or better terms to a Community Share offer then of course we will consider it.

**A timeline would be very useful to understand how much money we need to raise and by when?**

This is a good suggestion and if a share offer is launched we will certainly be indicating time scales.