

### **Consultation Process for Season Ticket Pricing**

As season ticket holders will by now be aware, the club has decided to increase season ticket prices for next season by around 10 per cent.

The club did not undertake what amounts to quite a substantial price increase lightly. A survey was sent to over 900 season ticket holders to understand what the impact on renewals would be if prices rose by 15 per cent. The percentage who indicated that they would be deterred from renewing was just under 10 per cent. After discussion with the Dons Trust Board, an increase of around 10 per cent was agreed, striking a balance between keeping the increase manageable for supporters and delivering a competitive playing budget. Prices were frozen for children and also for the Your Golf Travel terrace.

Whilst the survey was a responsible step to take to understand how season ticket holders would react, it was not a substitute for a proper dialogue with Dons Trust members about the club's pricing policies. It is only right that, in a supporter-owned club, trust members should be consulted on the club's approach to pricing, and the Dons Trust Board has previously undertaken to consult members on this.

There are a number of aspects of pricing that we now want to put to members. Regardless of what price season ticket holders are individually willing to pay, members may have views on how competitively prices should be set relative to other clubs. Should our emphasis be on affordability, or on maximising revenue to sustain the highest possible playing budget – or somewhere in-between? Should we benchmark our prices against other League Two clubs and, if so, which clubs?

There are also questions about the structure of prices. Have we got the relative pricing for adults, children, young adults and other concessions right? And is it appropriate that lower priced tickets should be available in the most desirable seats, such as the central blocks of the Paul Strank stand, or should these only be available at the full adult price?

There is also a question about decision making. Should prices be left to the discretion of the club's board or should a substantial increase require Dons Trust approval?

These are the types of question we want to put to members over the coming months, in time to inform season ticket pricing for the 2015/16 season. We want to hear from you at the SGM what questions you think ought to be part of our consultation. And you may wish to volunteer to help take this consultation forward.

We plan to link this consultation to a second phase of the strategy work that we undertook in 2010/11. Members may recall that we worked with the New Economics Foundation to consult on what was important to members, based on a range of scenarios illustrating different levels of ambition, location and ownership. It was very clear from that consultation that continued supporter ownership of the club was an overriding priority, with very little appetite to give up ownership of the club.

Whilst we anticipate that the priorities expressed by members back in 2010/11 will be largely unchanged, it does seem timely to refresh and put further flesh on the bones of our strategy, to bring it up to date with developments since then – in particular our promotion to the Football League and our potential move back to Wimbledon. In many ways, the issues raised are linked to some of the questions underpinning season ticket pricing – where do we want to be as a club, and what options are we prepared to pursue in order to realise those goals?