

## Richard Shepherd



**Proposers: Jane Lonsdale and Leigh Rumbelow**

### About me

I have always been a Wimbledon fan and I have always helped my club in the best way I could. From inflating balloons at the Dons Trust (DT) launch in 2002 as a 9-year-old, to being ballboy in the Ryman Premier, through to volunteering at Junior Dons (JD) Christmas parties I have always been involved.

I work as a finance business partner for a charity whose income is reliant on fundraising, donations, memberships, catering, and retail sales. My professional role is to apply strategic judgement and make sustainable business decisions by using financial and non-financial information. I present balanced conclusions with supporting evidence such as KPI analysis.

I may be in my early 30's, but AFC Wimbledon was founded by 4 people of a similar ages. I am prepared to put similar levels of energy and ambition to continue what they started - ensuring the DT and AFC Wimbledon is the most successful fan owned community club in England.

I am pro fan ownership. We fought for our club 20 years ago and we should never forgive or forget what happened. I believe that the issues that the club have seen recently have not been down to a fan-ownership model, rather how well the club has been run.

For more information about me, use this link below.

<https://linktr.ee/RShepherdDTB>

## **What will I bring to the board**

I believe I can serve the club by being on the DTB. I can bring a fresh perspective, providing representation for younger members, whilst having reached a stage in my professional career where I can provide strategic expertise and a vision.

I am tenacious and sceptical. I am a big believer that there is always room for improvement. I will ask questions to understand how and why the board makes the decisions it does. I will challenge the way things are done if there is a better way and I will ask the following question when decisions are being made:

### **“What would the fans think of this decision”?**

‘Think Fan First’ is essential to getting the supporters and members back onside with the DTB. We all have the club’s best interests at heart.

## **Think Fan First**

Both the Club and the Trust need to put fans at the heart of every decision. This can be achieved via:

- **An ambitious vision**
  - AFC Wimbledon has a history of reaching ambitious targets.
  - We should have the BEST volunteers, the BEST community club, the BEST fan owned team, the BEST fan engagement and be the BEST team that we can be
  - Clear achievable objectives must be created in line with the strategy to turn the vision into reality.
  - Critical Success Factors (CSFs) and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) must be used to track the progress.
- **Communication**
  - I want to improve the communication, but not a generic “I will improve communications” promise seen in the past.
  - Communicate proactively through surveys and engagement such as listening to members and fan feedback.
  - Ensure that there is a process for communication sign-off so that information is given in a timely manner.
  - I want to introduce regular reporting to the DT members by including high level KPIs with commentary on a regular basis. This will ensure transparency, accountability and engagement.
- **Culture**
  - Everyone involved at the club should feel valued and proud to work for AFC Wimbledon.
  - The DTB need to live and breathe the culture so that it becomes part of who AFC Wimbledon are. The tone of the culture should come from the top.
  - Improve fan and volunteer engagement and track its success through KPIs

- Keep what makes AFC Wimbledon unique and make it better. The fact that we're fan-owned and have excellent volunteer and community work should not be forgotten
- **Shadow Board**
  - Introduce a shadow board that will provide the DTB with more capacity to work on the strategic management of the club. The shadow board of 6-8 volunteers will meet and report to the DTB.
  - The shadow board will be picked to represent the diversity of AFC Wimbledon supporters
  - They will work on the less strategic areas of the DT such as community and membership engagement
  - It will provide an opportunity for young people to gain invaluable experience in their career and a pipeline of future DTB candidates.

### **Conclusion**

Regardless of whether my ideas are implemented or not, I will still add value to the board through my strategic business knowledge, fresh perspective and tenacious attitude to getting things done. I want what everyone who supports this club wants. I will aim to do everything I can to bring success to AFC Wimbledon.

You can contact me via any of my social media sites via the link below:

<https://linktr.ee/rshepherddtb>