

Dons Trust Board – James Ledward Manifesto

I am thrilled to be nominating myself for election to the Dons Trust Board. Since being co-opted in August 2025, I have been engrossed by all things AFC Wimbledon and Dons Trust, and I have not regretted putting myself forward for a minute. I would love to build on my co-opted time on the Board by becoming an elected member.

About Me

I am proud to be the DTB lead for Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (ED&I) – a responsibility I take extremely seriously. Whilst the Club and the Trust have both taken steps to diversify the membership and ensure that minority groups are represented, I believe that there is more to do. In my prior experience as Chair of The London Stags RFC, I championed inclusive practices in sport and have first-hand experience with the positive impact that inclusive practices can have on a Club's membership and the wider community. My time with The London Stags developed me into someone who is a passionate advocate for the power of sport to build community and promote wellbeing.

Professionally, I have extensive experience in governance, risk, and controls, currently serving as Corporate Risk and Controls Director at WPP. Prior to this I trained as a Chartered Accountant at Deloitte where I focused on Internal Audit and Risk Advisory projects. While governance may not be the most glamorous part of running a football club, it is essential, especially for a club with a unique ownership structure like ours. It's the foundation that allows everything else – community engagement, financial sustainability, and competitive success, to thrive. When governance goes wrong, or is non-existent, is when a Club runs into trouble.

What I Stand For

- A club culture that welcomes and celebrates diversity. Inclusive practices attract a broader membership base and are fundamental to success.
- Governance that is transparent, accountable, and inclusive.
- Financial decisions that protect our long-term sustainability and independence.

Why I'm Standing

AFC Wimbledon is more than a football club. It's a community built on the values of fairness, openness, and mutual respect. I believe that our governance structures must reflect those values in everything we do, from how we engage with fans and members, to how we support our teams and staff.

My Focus Areas

- **Ownership and Financial Sustainability:** Fan ownership of at least 50.01% is non-negotiable. It is the foundation of our identity as a Club and safeguards us against decisions which are not in our best interests. To be clear, I support the 50.01% motion. Any future share sale must be at a fair price and any investor must align with our values, our community, and our long-term vision.
- **ED&I:** I am currently the Board lead for ED&I. In the past, the DTB haven't always given this area the focus it deserves. Since being co-opted I have ensured that the DTB are represented at the Club's ED&I Group and ED&I is now a standing DTB agenda item. Football has the power to unite people across backgrounds, beliefs, and identities. As

members who are part of a fan-owned club, we must ensure that our structures and culture reflect that power – not just on matchdays, but every day.

- **Engaging Younger Members:** The current board does not reflect the full diversity of our membership, particularly younger fans. I want to change that. Our younger members are the future of our Club and we need to be involving them now, so they become ready and willing to take on roles in the future. If elected, I will work to create more accessible, relevant, and engaging opportunities for younger members to participate in shaping the Club's future.
- **Constitutional Review and Governance:** I am actively involved in the ongoing review of our governance framework to ensure it remains inclusive, transparent, and fit for purpose and am the DTB Lead for the Constitution Working Group. I have learnt a huge amount from this Group in such a short time, but there is more to do beyond the Constitution. The DTB will need robust policies and procedures to underpin the successful adoption of the new Constitution. My experience in governance and controls will mean I am ideally placed to drive this work forward.

Thank you for taking the time to read my manifesto. As a relatively new member of the Trust, I am looking forward to engaging with more members over the coming weeks.

James