



Dons Trust

MK Dons FC Fixtures Policy (Home and Away)

Document Owner: The Dons Trust board

Change Procedure: This document can be changed by a simple voting majority of the members of the Dons Trust board at a board meeting

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Purpose

We are once again in the same division and will face MK Dons FC home and away in the league this season.

This policy replaces the board's 2016 draft position statement to reflect:

- a) the confirmed position of the English Football League (EFL) on our obligations as a host club,
- b) the practical and reputational realities of these fixtures,
- c) their change of ownership, and
- d) the ending of the mediation agreement.

It is intended to give the board, Club staff and our members a clear, agreed approach.

Our principles and position have not changed. The board and Members' feelings remain as strong as ever, regardless of any change in ownership at the other club.



Principles

The three-man commission's 2002 decision to permit the relocation of Wimbledon FC to Milton Keynes was wrong. The subsequent birth and success of AFC Wimbledon does not change that, and no level of success would justify the decision.

We remain sensitive both to the pain felt by supporters who lived through 2002 and to the range of views across our wider membership. It is not for the board to dictate how members should feel. Unless and until members approve a change in policy, the board's approach will be to:

- Work with the Club board to ensure that matches take place **safely** (our primary concern) and without **loss of reputation** to the Club or Trust,
- Reflect the views of our members by avoiding engagement with, or acceptance of hospitality from, their officials; minimising contact beyond that necessary for the safe and proper conduct of the match,
- As part of our wider campaigning on football governance, to continue to oppose the franchising of any English football club away from its community.

Our obligations as host to another team

Regulations 18, 23 and 24 apply,

(<https://www.efl.com/governance/regulations/>).

We must provide:

18 Directors' Box

18.1 The Directors' box should enjoy a prime position in the main stand. There should be individual seats in a designated area segregated from general admission spectators in the same stand (with appropriate stewarding arrangements) and Home and Away areas should be clearly marked. The standard of accommodation for Home and Away directors shall be comparable.

- Home Minimum number of seats 24
- Away Minimum number of seats 16

18.2 The Home Club shall supply to the Away Club such numbers of Away Director's box seats as the Away

Club requests, the first 16 directors' box tickets to be supplied to the Away Club free of charge.

18.3 There must be a guest room for entertaining Home and Away Directors with appropriate subsistence / refreshments provided



23. Directors' Room

23.1 There must be a Directors' room capable of accommodating a minimum of 18 people for the use of home and visiting directors and there must be adjacent toilet facilities.

24 Parking Facilities

24.1 Parking facilities must be provided for Directors, with a minimum of 6 places for the visiting Directors and club officials in a location comparable to those provided to Home Directors. There must be safe parking arrangements for both the visiting team's coach and the Match Officials. All shall be provided free of charge.

EFL guidance

In May and June 2026, we sought guidance and clarity from the EFL. Their position is clear and unambiguous.

The EFL have confirmed that:

- There is **no basis in the regulations for a dispensation** from the hosting rules, and there can be **no exemption** for this fixture,
- If they request their entitlements and we decline, the EFL will have no choice but to act. It has the right to seek a **tribunal order compelling the Club to comply**,
- There is no established sanction framework but there would be sanctions should we not comply.

Policy for the home fixture

We must comply fully with the relevant regulations, while keeping contact to the minimum the rules require.

Compliance (what we must do):

- **Rule 18:** Provide a Directors' Box allocation of a standard **comparable** to that for home directors, segregated from general admission with the required free allocation of seats.
- **Rule 23:** Provide a Directors' Room and **appropriate subsistence / refreshments** and adjacent toilet facilities (Rules 18.3, 23).
- **Rule 24:** Provide the required **6 parking spaces** for their directors / officials, plus safe parking for the team coach and match officials.

Only the **Club Secretary** and any essential representative of the Club will formally represent the Club in dealings with them. No other formal board interaction will be provided.



Safety and order

- Safe conduct of the match is the overriding priority. We will plan jointly with the Club's safety team.
- We will support stewarding and policing plans that allow lawful expression of feeling while keeping everyone safe and protecting the reputation of the Club and Trust.

Policy for the away fixture

General attendance at these away fixtures in a personal capacity remains a matter for individual board members. No hospitality tickets, parking or boardroom access will be accepted except as detailed below.

No hospitality for anyone eligible for hospitality as defined in the AFC Wimbledon Boardroom policy

We have a firm policy that we do not accept hospitality from them.

Back in 2011 the board decided that "The Dons Trust board will not attend their boardroom and would instruct the Football Club board to do the same." (11 August 2011), and in 2012 that "no Football Club board or Dons Trust board member should accept hospitality" (08 November 2012).

This policy applies to all people eligible for hospitality as defined in the AFC Wimbledon Boardroom policy as within the AFC Wimbledon organisation (e.g. Club Chair, PLC board members, Trust board members, Presidents, Vice Presidents, and other club guests) and it applies to complimentary tickets and parking as well as boardroom or other hospitality.

Note that in 2012 it was agreed that complimentary tickets for players are exempted and that in 2019 it was agreed the Club Secretary or a representative of club "may need to be available on the day to liaise with MK Dons FC with ticket allocation issues and fulfil obligations with match official's representative from the club".

Communications

Reputational risk is **shared** between the Trust, the Club, and the EFL.

We will need to have some match-related communications ready for members.

We will appoint a **single spokesperson** and route all media enquiries to them.

- **Mediation:** the agreed statement at Appendix A has been published to members. Nothing can be said to media or to members, about mediation, that goes beyond that agreed wording.



- **Ahead of the home fixture:** The Dons Trust will issue a measured statement along the lines of this policy.
- **Tone to be factual, not attributed.** State the rule and our obligation as plain fact ("the rules require us to..."). Do **not** quote, characterise or speak on behalf of the EFL, and do not frame this as the EFL "forcing" us. Keep the framing as "this is the rule we are bound by," not "this is something being done to us."
- **Single agreed line.** Agree match-day scoreboard and programme wording including match-day announcements with the Club and underline the importance of sticking to the wording. Note that the DTB accepted that we must use their official registered name and badge on tickets, programmes and the scoreboard in July 2023.

Governance

This is an operating policy of the board, consistent with our previous stance and should be reviewed before any season where we are in the same division.

Any change to the underlying principles remains a matter for the members, noting the standing position (since 2005) that the Club **will** fulfil its fixtures to avoid open-ended sanction. Members who wish to shape the Trust's position are encouraged to do so through membership and the usual democratic channels.

Appendix A — Agreed statement on the ending of the mediation

The previous **mediation between the clubs has ended without agreement**. There is therefore no negotiated accommodation in place, and the EFL's default competition rules apply to our fixtures in full.

A **confidentiality clause survives** in respect of the mediation: its detailed terms, the substance of the discussions, and the reasons it ended may not be disclosed. The **only** permitted public reference to the mediation is the short statement here, the wording of which has been agreed with the EFL and them.

"The Dons Trust would like to update members that the mediation process we were asked to enter has finished with no agreed progress or outcomes.

We note that the emergence of the Independent Football Regulator (IFR) now means that a football club is unlikely to be taken from its community in the same way.

The Dons Trust will continue to focus on Wimbledon's football club, Wimbledon's community and Wimbledon's future".