

In 2002 we had nothing to lose. Now, after more than twenty years of incredible effort, commitment and a bit of luck we have a Football League team in a proper stadium back where we belong. The question is - where do we go from here?

In a well-governed sport, there is no ceiling for a well-run fan owned club, but we don't have that luxury. We're limited because, for completely understandable reasons given our history, we will not take the financial and ownership risks which other fans take for granted (and then suffer from). On the whole, Football is run badly; by the wrong people, for the wrong reasons.

What can we do to change that? We can set an example of a successful, progressive, welcoming and well-run club that wants to compete at the highest level possible while being a powerful community asset. To do that we should establish key principles including:

- Only borrow for capital investment to improve our stadium and increase its capacity
- Investigate all funding possibilities whilst always maintaining majority trust ownership and control of our club and stadium
- Create a vibrant, inclusive and open trust with an enthusiastic, empowered and informed board that makes good decisions quickly
- Give trust membership to permanent employees (if practical) and treat them with care and respect to help attract the best talent we can afford
- Create affiliate membership for like-minded local community bodies and learn from them and all grow together
- Establish a Code of Conduct among other similar clubs to compete fairly, not poach each other's players and managers, and pay bills on time
- Lead negotiations to improve football's governance, fix its broken financial model and always consider things from the fans' perspective, as after all we pay for everything!

I have thirty years' experience working for the largest financial and media companies planning, implementing and supporting large projects. I am now fortunate enough to have the time and commitment to use those analytical skills, helping our football club through the next stages of its amazing journey.

I have been a season ticket holder since 1992. I was an active WISA member, I sold and contributed to our unofficial matchday magazine "Yellow and Blue" when we tried and failed to stop the franchising of our club. I was on the working groups that created the trust. Then I was a member of the original Financial Working Group. Together, we launched the first AFC Wimbledon PLC share issue to purchase Kingsmeadow in 2003, the initial Dons Trust Bonds in 2004 and five-year season tickets in 2005. I stewarded, operated the turnstiles and worked in the cash office at Kingsmeadow until our move back to Plough Lane. I have also been known to bring tin-foil cups to matches and shake my keys when we win corners, something which is finally catching on!

If you vote for me, I will devote as much time as possible doing whatever I can to advance the principles above, while listening to and representing your wishes.

One last thing, please remember to vote and use all your votes wisely. Dynamic competitive elections are critical to our long-term success.

Thanks for reading. Come on you Dons!

Martin Drake

Dons Trust Founder Member DT-00048

