



GRIMSBY TOWN FOOTBALL CLUB SUPPORTER CHARTER 2023-2024

CUSTOMER SERVICE / COMPLAINTS

If you have a concern, complaint or comment, please contact the Club offices between the hours of 10am and 4pm Monday - Friday or by the following methods:

By Post : Grimsby Town Football Club
Customer Service Department
Blundell Park
Cleethorpes
North East Lincolnshire
DN35 7PY

By Telephone: 01472 605050 Ext: 8008

By Email: customerservices@gtfc.co.uk

All complaints and concerns will be responded to by a member of Club management within 10 working days.

If a complaint cannot be satisfactorily resolved at Club stage, in line with stated Club correspondence timescales, supporters should be advised that they can now refer the matter directly to The Independent Football Ombudsman (IFO) using the following details:

The Independent Football Ombudsman, Premier House, 1-5 Argyle Way. Stevenage, Hertfordshire, SG1 2AS. Email: contact@theifo.co.uk or Telephone: 0330 165 4223

EMPLOYEE CONDUCT

Grimsby Town Football Club (GTFC) employees will conduct themselves in a courteous and responsive manner in all dealings with supporters.

Please also refer to the club's anti-discrimination, equal opportunities & inclusion policy located at www.gtfc.co.uk/club-policies/.

Any issues can be reported via email to the management team: customerservices@gtfc.co.uk where you will receive a response within 10 working days.

CONSULTATION AND INFORMATION

The Club publicises its position on major policy issues in an easily digested format on the Official Website, Facebook, Twitter and in the Official Matchday Programme.

The Club continues to develop ways to consult with supporters, shareholders, sponsors, the local authority and other interested parties.

The Club actively seeks, where possible, the involvement of the supporters with regards to the design of new strips, safeguarding and general welfare.

The Club commits to holding a minimum of two open supporters meetings/forums a season. These will include either the majority owner, board director(s) or other senior executives in line with requirements under EFL regulation 128. In addition to this, the Mariners Trust meets on a regular basis with the Clubs Executive Management Team. However the Club runs an open policy where supporters do not have to wait for such forums to ask questions or put forward suggestions.

All relevant club policies can be viewed under the 'Club' tab on our official website, including, but not limited to our GDPR and Environmental policies.

TICKETING

Pricing:

The Club continues to strive for wider access to matches by offering a broad range of ticket prices.

The Club operates a scheme to enable supporters to pay for season tickets by instalments with a small administration cost.

Allocation:

At least 5% of tickets to each game will be made available to non-season ticket holders

Concessions:

Concessionary offers are available to junior supporters, senior citizens, unemployed, students and disabled supporters..

Ancient Mariner: 85 and over, proof of age may be requested.

Senior Citizen: 65 and over, proof of age may be requested.

Adult: 23 to 64 years old

Young Adult: 18 to 22, proof of age may be requested

Junior: 3 to 17 accompanied or 14 to 17 unaccompanied, proof of age may be requested

Student: 18+ in full-time education, proof of full-time education is required.

Unemployed: In receipt of Job Seekers Allowance, Universal Credit or similar, proof of benefit is required.

Disabled: Disabled supporters will be charged the full applicable rate for their age however a carer (if required) can enter for free. Proof of high rate DLA/PIP is required at the time of obtaining a free carer ticket. **Please note that the Main Stand, Osmond Stand and McMenemy's are the only areas inside the stadium that have wheelchair access and disabled washroom facilities. Carers must be sat with the disabled supporter that a free ticket has been issued for.**

The club operates an early bird discount scheme for home and away supporters with tickets reduced by £2.00, when purchased before the turnstiles open on the day of the match, excluding the Young's Upper Stand where the FULL price applies at all times.

Facilities:

The Club provides:

The Main Stand is clearly signposted as an area for the use of family groups, junior supporters, disabled supporters and their carers. The Operations & Safety Manager can be contacted for details of our disability facilities and ticket allocation however we currently have 20 wheelchair bays available in the Main Stand. Email: safety@gtfc.co.uk

In addition to this there are 20 wheelchair bays available in the Osmond Stand with a wheelchair accessible washroom for visiting supporters to use.

McMenemy's is our hospitality area that has stair lift access (some accessibility restrictions for large motorised wheelchairs) with space available on a match by match basis for supporters. Please contact the Commercial department for more information. Email: commercial@gtfc.co.uk

The Club clearly identifies restricted view seats on match tickets but does not offer a discounted price for such seats.

Loyalty and Membership Schemes:

The Club has an 1878 loyalty scheme for fans that are unable to commit to a full season ticket. Benefits of this scheme include 6th match free when purchasing 5 home match tickets, Club shop discount and priority (after full season ticket holders) for home cup matches and away match tickets. Details of this will be published on Club channels before sales commence.

Away Matches:

GTFC supporters are allocated tickets for away matches, with preference given to season ticket holders where necessary, especially where demand surpasses available tickets. The host club determines the price of these tickets not GTFC, however prices will be in line matchday rates for their own supporters in a comparable stand.

Cup Competitions:

Tickets for Cup Competitions at Blundell Park are priced as per league matches unless agreed otherwise with the visiting Club. Season ticket holders and sponsors will have first refusal on their seat for a designated period prior to the match, where the Club reserves the right to implement a voucher system to ensure as fair an allocation of tickets as possible. Season ticket holder & sponsor seats will be reserved for a period of time before the home cup fixture before being released for general sale. Full details on this will be communicated by the Club's official channels before ticket sales commence.

Mariners Trust Members:

Mariners Trust members will have a recognised priority for specific home & away fixtures (after season ticket holders, sponsors and 1878). Details will be made available on the Club and Trust web site prior to tickets being made available for sale, however Mariners Trust members will normally have access to tickets before they are released on general sale.

Supporters and Disabled Liaison:

We have a dedicated Supporter Liaison Officer (SLO) and Disabled Liaison Officer (DLO) that work on behalf of the supporters, with a specific aim of improving communication, information and the sharing of ideas between supporters and the Club. They are also available on a match day around the stadium to improve the overall experience of all supporters when visiting Blundell Park. Priorities for them on a match day are the comfort and enjoyment of all supporters visiting Blundell Park.

The Supporter Liaison Officer or Disabled Liaison Officer can be contacted via email and will normally respond within 5 working days. Their contact details are as follows:

supporters@gtfc.co.uk

disability@gtfc.co.uk

Any issues with regards to the SLO or DLO should be emailed through to the Customer Services Department: customerservices@gtfc.co.uk

Returns/Refunds:

Season Tickets:

A refund (full or pro-rata) will only be given..

- a. Prior to the first home game of the season. An administration charge may be applicable.
- b. Death of a season ticket holder.
- c. Exceptional circumstances, to be considered at the Club's discretion

Prior to a match: The club will issue a full refund or exchange on any unwanted purchased tickets (not complimentary tickets).

After a match: No refunds will be given after the match has taken place.

If a match is postponed before kick-off, ticket holders are entitled to free admission to the re-arranged game. If a match is abandoned after kick-off, but prior to half time, spectators are entitled to half price admission to the re-arranged match.

Lost Season Tickets:

If you lose or misplace your Season Ticket Card, the Club will charge an administration fee of 1 game (age related). A match ticket will be issued for this game. If the Season Ticket Card is then found or handed into the Ticket Office, a refund of the Match Ticket will be given. If the Season Ticket Card is still lost or misplaced after 1 game, the Club will re-issue a new Season Ticket Card with a new QR code. To obtain the administration refund you will need to produce both the replacement Match Ticket and found Season Ticket Card to ticket office staff.

ACCOMMODATING AWAY SUPPORTERS

The Club abides by English Football League (EFL), National League (NL) & Football Association (FA) Regulations governing the allocation of tickets to visiting clubs. Ticket offers for any specific match will be made available to all supporters.

The Club does not charge admission prices to supporters of a visiting club, which are higher than those charged to our own supporters for comparable accommodation. In particular our concessionary rates offered to senior citizens and junior supporters apply to supporters of a visiting club. Proof of concession must be provided on a matchday, failure to provide proof will result in the full adult rate of £24 being charged.

Visiting Supporters will be housed in the Osmond Stand. The Club reserves the right to change the seating allocation for away supporters and their location depending on the match risk assessment and home support ticket demand. Although safety steward directions must be obeyed at all times regardless of the allocated seat number on the Matchday ticket. Away supporter ticket numbers will remain in line with the EFL, NL & FA regulations with regards to the overall percentage of the stadium's capacity.

MERCHANDISE

The Club endeavours to ensure that all replica kit designs shall have a minimum lifespan of one season.

Details of the next intended change of kits are available from the club shop.

The Club carries out its obligations under English Football League Regulations to prevent price fixing in relation to the sale of replica strip.

The Club offers refunds on merchandise in accordance with relevant Consumer Law.

SMOKING POLICY

It is illegal, as per the Health Act 2006, to smoke inside any enclosed building or work place, this includes all football stadia. To accommodate supporters designated open areas have been created inside Blundell Park that permits supporters to smoke during half time only. Smoking outside of this time in the designated areas is **STRICTLY PROHIBITED**. Electronic or Vapour cigarettes can only be used in the designated areas during half time. Any breach of the smoking regulation will result in supporters being asked to leave without a refund of ticket.

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

The main objective of the Community Project is to encourage fun and participation amongst all ages, particularly children aged 5-16 years, in the hope that many of these will develop affection for the Club.

The emphasis is on encouraging boys and girls to enjoy football and to take an active part in all football related activities, no matter what level of ability.

We support active integration of the Football Club into the local community through player appearances, fundraising activities and supporting local charities and businesses.

COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES

In order to purchase/book commercial Matchday packages or sponsorship/advertising packages, you will be required to contact our commercial department by e-mailing commercial@gtfc.co.uk or by visiting our commercial website.

Our commercial department can be reached via the e-mail address above, or by calling 01472 605050 (ext. 8007).

CHARITY ACTIVITIES

Charity requests must be in writing or via email: charity@gtfc.co.uk where consideration will be given to offer support. Understandably all Football Clubs get inundated with requests and therefore, with regret, we are not able to support every request that we receive however we are very keen to support local causes.

It is not possible to accommodate charity football matches at the stadium during the football playing season, although we may have spaces available at the end of each season. Please email: david@gtfc.co.uk for availability as these are booked well in advance on a first come basis.

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

Grimsby Town Football Club acknowledges and accepts it has a responsibility for the wellbeing and safety of all children, young people and vulnerable adults who are under the Club's care or utilising the Club's facilities. It is the duty of all adults working at the Club to safeguard the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults by creating an environment that protects them from harm.

We acknowledge that every child, young person or vulnerable adult who plays or participates in football should be able to take part in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from poor practice and abuse. Grimsby Town Football Club recognises that this is the responsibility of every adult involved in our club whether they are volunteers, match officials, helpers on club tours, football coaches, club officials or medical staff.

All current staff who are regularly caring for, supervising, training or being in sole charge of children and young people will be DBS checked at an enhanced level.

The Club provides a range of services and activities that positively impacts on the lives of vulnerable groups both directly and indirectly. Safeguarding individuals, ensuring their welfare, safety and health is of paramount importance.

Grimsby Town Football Club is also committed to creating opportunities for individuals to participate in a broad spectrum of activities at the Club at the same time as creating a safer culture for the participants.

All children aged under 14 attending a match at Blundell Park Stadium must be accompanied by a responsible adult for the duration of the game. This policy has been introduced to safeguard our younger fans in the event of an emergency on match day. We reserve the right to refuse entry to any supporter under the age of 14 if they are not accompanied by a responsible adult, although their safeguarding needs will be met by the Club until a responsible adult/guardian has arrived to collect them.

Any children who become separated from family or friends should approach a uniformed steward who will take the appropriate action.

If children enter the stadium unaccompanied, the club reserves the right to treat them in the same manner as other supporters should they breach the EFL/NL Ground Regulations, including asking them to leave the stadium. Any youngster that is asked to leave will have their safeguarding needs catered for by the Club until they are met by a parent/guardian or where the police have intervened.

The Club's Policies include:

- Having commitment from executive managers, trustees, the Mariners Trust and Club directors to safeguarding
- A safe recruitment, selection and induction processes consistent across the Club
- Ensuring that all relevant staff are DBS checked at the appropriate level
- Providing training at the appropriate levels for staff and volunteers
- The Club has designated Safeguarding/Welfare Officer Contact information, easily accessible for staff, children, young people, vulnerable adults and their families
- Having an easily understandable reporting and monitoring system
- Working co-operatively with partner organisations and services
- Having a commitment to manage and monitor allegations of discrimination, harassment, abuse, and bullying.

Grimsby Town Football Club has a Safeguarding Policy which complies with Government legislation and is in accordance with the rules outlined by the Football Association English Football League, and National League which is available on request.

Grimsby Town Football Club has appointed Safeguarding Officers to the post of Lead Designated Safeguarding Officer (LDSO) they have overall responsibility for the safeguarding and welfare of all vulnerable groups at the Club and at our Academy. They can be contacted via e-mail at safeguarding@gtfc.co.uk, Tel: 01472 605050 ext: 8008 to discuss any issues or concerns in these areas. The LDSO's report directly to the Safeguarding Board that consists of the Clubs Lead Designated Safeguarding Officer Peter Macleod, Academy Designated Safeguarding Officer Adam Smith, Club Chief Executive Debbie Cook, Sports & Education Trust Manager Jo Schofield, Trustee Nicola Massingham and Facilities Manager David White.

The Safeguarding Board is responsible for any issues relating to safeguarding, training of staff and the management of safeguarding reporting.

ACCEPTABLE SUPPORTER BEHAVIOUR

Supporters are expected to uphold the values of Grimsby Town Football Club and behave in a manner that does not breach the EFL/NL Ground Regulations or FA rules. Foul and abusive language is not acceptable and supporters could find that they are asked to leave the stadium if they persist in its use without a refund of their ticket.

The Club operates a zero tolerance towards abuse of any supporter, player, match official, Club Staff, Club Directors, volunteers or any other person directly or indirectly involved with the Club. Gesturing and/or threats of violence towards anyone will result in ejection from the stadium. Any supporter that is asked to leave due to a breach of the EFL/NL Ground Regulations will not be entitled to a refund of their ticket.

All supporters are asked to: Respect the Players, Respect the Officials and Respect Each Other.

The Main Stand is a family stand; abuse of any kind will result in supporters being asked to leave or relocated to the Pontoon Stand (subject to capacity and where it's appropriate) for the remainder of the match. If any supporter refuses to move then stewards will be within their rights to ask supporters to leave the stadium. If a supporter is asked to leave, their ticket will hold no value and refunds will not be available. Any supporter concerns over this policy must be put in writing to the Operations & Safety Manager: safety@gtfc.co.uk

For further information please see the EFL Ground Regulations:

<https://gtfc.co.uk/ground-regulations/>

Pyrotechnic Devices:

Grimsby Town Football Club deems any supporter discharging or bringing pyrotechnic devices in the stadium as dangerous and illegal, with action taken against all who use them or that have them on their persons. Any supporter found with (used or unused) or caught discharging a pyrotechnic device will be detained by safety stewards and subsequently arrested by Humberside Police. Custodial Sentences have been issued to supporters found with these devices by local Crown Courts. Supporters found with any pyrotechnic device could be issued with a court imposed banning order.

Pyrotechnic devices (including smoke bombs) are dangerous, release toxic fumes (that are being investigated as a cause of cancer), get extremely hot and ultimately can explode. For

the safety of yourselves and your fellow supporters, please do not use any type of pyrotechnic device, limbs have been lost as a result of smoke bombs exploding at football stadiums.

Full details of the EFL Ground Regulations can be found on the Club website:

<https://www.grimsby-townfc.co.uk/club/ground-regulations/>

CLUB & FOOTBALL BANNING ORDERS

Any supporter that has finished a Club ban or court imposed Football Banning Order will have to write to the Executive Management Team: safety@gtfc.co.uk and request permission to attend football matches at Blundell Park. The Executive Management Team will consult with all relevant parties to determine the risk exposure to Grimsby Town Football Club. Any supporter given permission to attend football matches once again at Blundell Park could be subject to conditions for entry. Conditions for entry could include:

- Supporters having to sign an Acceptable Behaviour Agreement before being allowed to return.
- Supporters may be asked to sit in a specified location.

All conditions last for one full season and will be removed subject to supporters adhering to the EFL Ground Regulations during that season. This includes any incident reports passed to the Club from Humberside Police that relates to the supporter. Any breaches of the EFL Ground Regulations or disorder reports from the police could result in any of the following:

- Supporters having their conditions enforced for a second season.
- Information being shared with Humberside Police, where appropriate, and relative to the prevention of crime and disorder.
- Removal of their season ticket (if purchased) without a refund given.
- Issued with a Club ban that could be extended to a life time ban depending on the severity of the incident.

Any supporter breaching the EFL Ground Regulations or subject of a police incident report will be informed in writing by the Executive Management Team (Where address details are known). The Clubs Executive Management Team will determine the facts from police officers, GTFC staff and the supporter (where contact is possible) before presenting this information. Information presented will be reviewed and then a decision will be made as to

whether a Club ban is warranted and the duration of the Club ban. Whilst the incident is being dealt with, the Club's Executive Management Team may write to the supporter and ask that they do not attend until such time as the matter has been resolved.

Any conditions imposed will be notified in writing to the supporter as long as we have their address details, otherwise supporters will be notified at the turnstiles with entry refused.

Supporter information is not shared with our fellow EFL Clubs however it is shared with Humberside Police where appropriate and in relation to preventing crime and disorder.

Any supporter that has been subject to a Court imposed Football Banning Order for duration of 5 years or more, or that has been subject to more than 2 Football Banning Orders could be subject to a permanent ban from attending any match involving Grimsby Town Football Club. This is due to the seriousness of the offence together with the high number of repeat offenders that the Club has currently on Court imposed Football Banning Orders.

An appeals process is in place and must be put in writing to the Club's Directors. The Directors for GTFC will respond to the appeal within 10 working days. The Directors decision is final with no further appeals process available at the Club however you can refer this to:

**The Independent Football Ombudsman,
Preimer House
1-5 Argyle Way,
Stevenage
Hertfordshire
SG1 2AS
[Email: contact@theifo.co.uk](mailto:contact@theifo.co.uk)
Telephone: 0330 165 4223**

HATE CRIME REPORTING

What is a hate crime?

The Police and Crown Prosecution Service have agreed a common definition of hate incidents – this is any incident that the victim or anyone else thinks was motivated by hostility or prejudice based on one of the following personal characteristics:

- Disability (including physical disability, sensory impairments, learning disabilities, mental ill-health, long term illness or health conditions)
- Race or ethnicity
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation (for example lesbian, gay or bisexual people)
- Transgender identity (for example trans, women or men or gender reassignment)

Hate incidents can be verbal abuse, like name-calling or offensive jokes; bullying or intimidation; physical attacks; threats; online abuse for example on social media; displaying or circulating discriminatory literature; damage to your home or possessions; or abuse of friendships – this is sometimes called “mate crime”.

When hate incidents become criminal offences they are known as hate crimes. Hate incidents often escalate to crimes or tension in a community. For this reason the Police are concerned about hate incidents as well as hate crimes. The Police can only prosecute when the law is broken but they can work with the Council and other partners to try and prevent any escalation in seriousness.

If you are attending any home match days and you have received or been witness to, or have any concerns about any Hate incident, you can call or text directly to the club hotline number: **07926575610** giving your location within the stadia.

You can also contact the Pete Macleod Equality, Diversity, Disability and Inclusion Officer by email: pete@gtfc.co.uk or telephone: **07850464884**, or The Clubs Operations & Safety Manager by email: safety@gtfc.co.uk or telephone: **01472 605050 ext: 8008**

Communication:

Grimsby Town FC are committed to communicating, when appropriate, incidents relating to Hate Crime to its supporters and the general public in order to highlight the issue and publicise the action taken by the Club.

The club will use every means available in the promotion of a positive experience for those supporting GTFC or visiting any of our venues, this includes the adherence at all times of the EFL Ground Regulations. Media platforms will also be used to highlight and raise awareness of topics affecting the National Game, the Club or those specified by the EFL or Football Association.

In the event of a serious breach of the club's safeguarding or anti-discrimination policies, communication to the general public will be made following consultation with the English Football League / Football Association / National League, the Club's Directors or when deemed necessary after the Club has taken legal advice and it is in the public interest to be informed.

All communication will be conducted through our official website, www.gtfc.co.uk or alternatively through statements which will be communicated to the Press by the Club or Humberside Police.

Grimsby Town Football Club would like to emphasise that we operate a zero tolerance policy on discrimination or hate crime of any sort. Anyone found to be in breach of this could receive a lifetime Club ban and have the incident referred to Humberside Police for further action. Any reported acts of supporters breaching the EFL Ground regulations or FA Regulations at home or away stadia, can and will most likely lead to formal disciplinary action being taken by the FA, Safety Advisory Group and EFL against the Club. This could result in the stadium licence having restrictions applied such as playing behind closed doors, reduced capacity, a fine, point's deduction or other sanctions such as the Club having Humberside Police match commander and officers at all matches.

You can also use the 'Kick it Out' reporting app:

<https://www.kickitout.org/forms/online-reporting-form>

The link provides users with the ability to attach video, photo and audio evidence, which help support investigations into discriminatory abuse and behaviour and ultimately lead to criminal action being taken.

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION, EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES & INCLUSION

1. Grimsby Town Football Club and Grimsby Town Sports and Education Trust is committed to providing equality of opportunity for all the people with whom we work, and who work for and support us.

2. Grimsby Town Football Club, subsidiaries and partners agencies are an equal opportunities employer. We are all committed to equal opportunity within our organisations.

3. We believe it is essential for the future of the Club and Trust that diversity is adopted as a universal principle, enabling individuality to flourish regardless of gender, race, sexual orientation, nationality, ethnic or national origins, marital status, age, religious belief or disability. (Equality Act 2010)

4. Grimsby Town Football Club will not tolerate sexual, homophobic or racially based harassment or other discriminatory behaviour, whether physical or verbal, and will work to ensure that such behaviour is met with appropriate disciplinary action in whatever context it occurs. We are fully committed to the 'Kick It Out' Campaign and have a zero tolerance policy to any form of discriminatory behaviour including the use of foul language. All staff and supporters are encouraged to report any concerns and incidents. Any proven incidents will be referred to Humberside Police for the consideration of prosecution and the Football Club will also consider issuing a club ban.

5. The differences within our community are highly valued by the Club and we will take whatever measures possible to build cohesion and ensure inclusion for all.

Contact process for any issues relating to Safeguarding, Disability, Inclusion or Discrimination is as follows:

safeguarding@gtfc.co.uk

Pete Macleod – Lead Designated Safeguarding and EDI Officer

Adam Smith – Academy Designated Safeguarding Officer

OFFICIAL CLUB SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS

You can follow Grimsby Town Football Club at ‘[@OfficialGTFC](#)’ on all the major social media channels, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok & YouTube. You can also view our official iFollow channel at iFollow Mariners, which is accessible via our official club website.