



GRIMSBY TOWN FOOTBALL CLUB

CUSTOMER CHARTER 2019

CUSTOMER SERVICE / COMPLAINTS

If you have a legitimate concern, complaint or constructive comment, please contact the Club's Customer Services Designate at the Club Offices between the hours of 9am and 5pm Monday - Friday or by the following methods:

By Post Grimsby Town Football Club plc
Stadium Manager & Ground Safety Officer
Blundell Park
Cleethorpes
North East Lincolnshire
DN35 7PY

By Telephone 01472 605050 Ext: 8008

By Facsimile 01472 693665

By Email customerservice@gtfc.co.uk

All complaints will be dealt with and responded to by a member of Club management within 15 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, Suite 49, 33 Great George Street, Leeds LS1 3AJ.
Email: contact@theifo.co.uk or Telephone: 0800 588 4066

STAFF CONDUCT

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

Please also refer to the club's anti-discrimination, equal opportunities & inclusion policy. Any issues can be reported via email to the management team: customerservice@gtfc.co.uk where you will receive a response within 15 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 Magazine.

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.

Under regulation 115 the Club meets its obligations by having a member of the Mariners Trust on the Board of Directors. The Board meets a minimum of 6 times a season, where the Trust is able to represent the views and needs of the supporters. In addition to this the Mariners Trust meets on a regular basis with the Clubs Executive Management Team. Open supporter engagement meetings are held in conjunction with the Club by the Mariners Trust at various points throughout the season, with Club officials and Directors available to answer supporter's questions.

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 at a reasonable rate of interest.

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, the unemployed, students and disabled supporters. All concessionary offers are non sex discriminatory.

Ancient Mariner	85 and over, free entry with full paying adult / chaperone, proof of age is required.
Senior Citizen	65 and over, proof of age is required.
Junior	14 years and younger, proof of age is required.
Young Adult	15 – 18 years old, proof of age is required.
Student	19+ in full-time education, proof of full-time education is required.
Unemployed	In receipt of Job Seekers Allowance or similar, proof of benefit is required.
Disabled	Disabled supporters will be charged the full applicable rate for their age however their carer (if required) can enter for free. Please note that the Main Stand, Osmond Stand and McMenemy's are the only areas inside the stadium that have wheelchair access washroom facilities.



Facilities

The Club provides:

The Main Stand is clearly signposted as an area for the use of family groups, junior supporters, disabled spectators and their carers. The Stadium & Ground 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.

In addition to this there are 20 wheelchair bays available in the Osmond Stand with W/C facilities for visiting supporters.

McMenemy's is our hospitality area that has stair lift access with space available on a match by match basis. 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 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]

Away Matches

The Club's supporters are allocated tickets for away matches, with preference given to season ticket holders if necessary. The home club determines the cost of these tickets.

Supporter's behaviour at away stadiums is monitored and reported back to GTFC. The Club reserves the right to exclude supporters from Blundell Park or impose conditions for entry as a result of breach of the EFL Ground Regulations at away stadiums.

Any visiting supporter that is subject of a Club ban from their home Club will have entry refused without any refund of ticket. Please do not travel as entry will be refused.

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 during a designated period prior to the match and 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 up until 5pm on the day before a weekend match and 12pm on the day of a mid-week fixture.

Mariners Trust Members

Mariners Trust members will have a recognised priority for specific home & away fixtures (after season ticket holders and sponsors). 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 Liaison

We have dedicated supporter liaison officers 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 in the Main Stand (family stand) to improve the overall customer experience when visiting Blundell Park. Priorities for them on a match day are the comfort and enjoyment of all supporters visiting Blundell Park, together with the liaison with disability supporters and carers to ensure that their needs are met.

The supporter liaison officers 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 Support Liaison Officers should be emailed through to the Customer Services Department: ***customerservice@gtfc.co.uk***

Returns/Refunds

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.

ACCOMMODATING AWAY SUPPORTERS

The Club abides by English Football League (EFL) & 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 unless we have a local offer agreed by the EFL as a promotion for a match. 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 £22 being charged.

Away supporters will predominantly be accommodated in the covered corner of 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, 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 & FA regulations with regards to the overall percentage of the stadium's capacity.



MERCHANDISE

The Club endeavours to ensure that all replica Strip 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 its 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 as per our fellow EFL members, 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.

CHARITY ACTIVITIES

The Club has appointed the local SSAFA branch (The Armed Forces Charity) as our nominated charity for the 2019 – 20 season. This is in addition to supporting the EFL chosen partner charity MIND, with priority given to these charities for any collections made on a match day.

Any other 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 do have spaces available at the end of each season. Please email: stadium@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 is 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 12 and under 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 12 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 by escorting them to our 1st aid station [Pontoon Stand].

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 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 and the English Football 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 2 Lead Designated Safeguarding Officers Nick Dale (Club) & Adam Smith (Academy), Club Chief Executive Ian Fleming, Sports & Education Trust Manager Graham Rodger, Trustee Nicola Massingham and Club Director Philip Day. 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 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, 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 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 its 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 Stadium & Ground Safety Manager: safety@gtfc.co.uk.**

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, will automatically be issued with a minimum 3 year club ban. Any ban issued by the Club could also result in entry being refused at other venues that Grimsby Town Football Club are playing at. Humberside Police spotters are used as a means of identifying Club banned supporters; therefore we would strongly advise all supporters that are Club banned to contact the venue prior to travelling.



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

SUPPORTERS BEHAVIOUR PANEL

Grimsby Town Football Club has a Supporters Behaviour Panel that consists of a minimum of 3 members, where at least one member is independent (not employed, Club volunteer or on the Board of Directors) from the Club, the other panel members will consist of a Club Director and member of the Executive Management Team.

The Club's Executive Management Team will write to the supporter concerned, inform them of the incident and ask for them to comment where appropriate and where supporter address details are known.

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 will be subject to conditions for entry. Conditions for entry are as follows:

- Supporters will have to sign an Acceptable Behaviour Contract before being allowed to return.
- Supporters may be asked to sit in a specified location.
- Supporters may have entry refused for fixtures deemed by Humberside Police to be at risk of rival supporter disorder.

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 to the Supporters Behaviour Panel. The Supporters Behaviour Panel will review the information presented and then determine if 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. Police reports of behaviour at away venues are considered by the Supporters Behaviour Panel and the Executive Management Team to be factually correct and normally sufficient evidence for issuing a Club ban.

A Club ban can also cause restrictions at away venues as many EFL Clubs do not want Club banned supporters at their venues. We would strongly advise any supporter on a Club ban to contact the away venue prior to travel as entry could be refused with no refund of ticket offered. 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. Humberside Police send police spotters to most fixtures, where Clubs will ask them to identify supporters subject to a Club ban. Humberside Police will not pass on any supporters name or address unless they are subject of a Court imposed Banning Order, they will simply point out Club banned supporters.

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 15 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, Suite 49, 33 Great George Street, Leeds, LS1 3AJ.

Email: contact@theifo.co.uk

Telephone: 0800 588 4066

HATE CRIME REPORTING

Grimsby Town Football Club and Grimsby Town Community Sports and Education Trust have formed a Hate Crime Reporting partnership with Humberside Police, North East Lincolnshire Council and the Youth Offending Service. They have a specific aim of reducing Hate Crime related incidents at all Football venues by means of education and where necessary, the prosecuting and banning of those proved guilty by a Court of Law.

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 Adrian Merrikin Equality, Diversity, Disability and Inclusion Officer by email: adrianmerrikin@gtfc.co.uk or telephone: 07850464884, or The Stadium & Ground Safety Manager Nick Dale by email: nick@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. Those found guilty by a Court of Law will be named and shamed by the Club, using a wide variety of media platforms.

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, 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 or FA Regulations at home or away, can and most likely will 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: 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 OPPORTUNITES & 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

Nick Dale – Lead Designated Safeguarding Officer – Club

Adam Smith – Lead Designated Safeguarding Officer – Academy

disability@gtfc.co.uk

Adie Merrikin – Equality, Diversity, Disability and Inclusion Officer