



## **SOUTHEND UNITED FOOTBALL CLUB LTD** **CUSTOMER CHARTER**

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

Southend United's mission is to play professional football at the highest level. In doing so we aim to provide a family-friendly service and cater for the local community to the best of our ability. The Club, together with its Academy, seeks to develop the potential of young people to achieve sporting excellence. In addition, and in conjunction with its Community Trust programme, the Club seeks to create opportunities for those who are disadvantaged or have special needs and promote community participation.

### **CUSTOMER SERVICE**

Amanda Balcomb, Club Secretary, is the principal customer services contact at Southend United Football Club and can be contacted for any enquiries or complaints as follows:

- by letter to Southend United Football Club, Roots Hall, Victoria Avenue, Southend on Sea, Essex SS2 6NQ
- by telephone on the main Club number on 01702 304050
- by e-mail to [info@southend-united.co.uk](mailto:info@southend-united.co.uk)

The Club's website address is [www.southendunited.co.uk](http://www.southendunited.co.uk) and normal office opening hours are 9 am to 5.30 pm Monday to Friday. Ticket office opening hours are Monday to Friday 9.30am to 5.00pm and 10.00am-3.00pm on Saturdays. On matchdays the ticket office will be open until kick off and for 30 minutes after the match has finished.

The Club will endeavour to respond to customer complaints within 10 working days of receipt of the communication. However, if it is not possible to provide a full response to the matters raised within this timeframe as further investigation is required, the complaint will be acknowledged within the 10 working days and a response sent within 21 working days. The Club may respond by e-mail, letter, or telephone.

Should any supporter not be satisfied with the Club's response to their complaint, then they can take the matter further with The Independent Football Ombudsman who can be contacted at Suite 49, 57 Great George Street, Leeds, LS1 3AJ.

## STAFF CONDUCT

The Club believes that good customer relations form an integral part of its operation and expects all employees to conduct themselves in a courteous and responsive manner in all dealings with customers, supporters, sponsors and the local community and to carry out their duties with integrity and professionalism.

Staff should understand the Club's Equality and Safeguarding Policies, procedures and best practice guidelines and use this understanding to ensure safe working practices, appropriate reporting of concerns and contribute positively to an environment that is free of discrimination, bullying and harassment. Southend United is a best practice employer and is committed to inclusion and antidiscrimination and safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and employees to share these commitments.

## EQUALITY, INCLUSION AND ANTI DISCRIMINATION

Southend United is committed to ensuring that football is inclusive of all communities and free from discrimination. We are dedicated to promoting equality on the grounds of any \*protected characteristic as defined in the Equality Act 2010.

Everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect, and Southend United along with the EFL is committed to eliminating all forms of discrimination incorporating, direct, indirect, associative or perceptive discrimination and all forms of bullying, harassment and victimisation.

Southend United works closely with **Kick it Out**, which provides a reporting service for discriminatory behaviour through its 'Kick it Out' app. The free app provides users with the ability to confidentially report incidents that they may see, hear or witness at a match. (for more info please visit [www.kickitout.org](http://www.kickitout.org))

We also offer a text alert system on match days, where fans can discreetly report issues as they occur, enabling the Club to utilise CCTV and stewarding within the area to capture the incident as it happens, ensuring that this is passed to the police or relevant authority, as evidence. The **match day text alert number is 07701331606**. When using this service, please add the area of the ground that you are sitting in; stand, row, seat number and the type of anti social behaviour that is occurring.

*\* Protected Characteristics – Age, Sex (gender), Gender Reassignment, Disability, Race (ethnicity) Religion and beliefs, Marriage and civil partnerships, Maternity and paternity.*

A copy of the Club's Equality Policy is attached to the Charter.

Southend United is an equal opportunities employer and with regards job adverts, welcomes applications from all communities. The Club continually works towards the EFL Equality Code of Practice to demonstrate our commitment to inclusion and anti-discrimination.

## **SAFEGUARDING**

Southend United is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. It expects all staff and employees to share this commitment and to be familiar and comply with the Club's written Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures handbook which is updated on an ongoing basis.

## **COMMUNITY ACTIVITY AND CHARITY REQUESTS**

Southend United's foundation is its community, and the Club will continue to dedicate its efforts, resources, and facilities to promote sport, education and welfare within the local area. In order to achieve this the Club works in partnership with the Southend United Community & Educational Trust whose aims are for the benefit of the public generally, and in particular South Essex and its surrounding area, in order to:

- promote community participation in healthy recreation through sport
- to provide and help provide facilities for sport and other leisure time occupations for people who need them due to youth, age, infirmity or disablement, poverty or social circumstances - and to advance the education of children

Further details regarding the Trust and its activities can be found at [www.sufccommunity.co.uk](http://www.sufccommunity.co.uk).

The Club is committed to help and assist the local community wherever and whenever possible and has a dedicated Community Liaison Officer, Rhys Ellingham, who works actively to promote these interests. We liaise with many charities and good causes to support the local community to the best of our ability. We are inundated with requests for support from a huge number of really worthwhile causes and it is impossible to assist them all. We are unable to make monetary donations but we will assist with ticket vouchers for local causes where possible. All applications should be accompanied by a letter of authority from the benefitting charity.

### **Supporter Liaison Officer**

The Club's Supporter Liaison Officer role is to engage with fans of the Club and provide opportunities for complaints, feedback and suggestions to be made on the improvement of the fan experience and relevant Club operations. All related correspondence will be replied to within 5 working days.

The Club take pride in providing fans with these opportunities.

Contact details:

Rhys Ellingham  
 Commercial Manager / Supporter Liaison Officer  
 01702 304135  
[rhys.ellingham@southend-united.co.uk](mailto:rhys.ellingham@southend-united.co.uk)

## **SUPPORTER CONSULTATION**

Southend United regularly consults with its supporters through liaison meetings and through meetings with representatives of other supporter organisations.

The Club publicises its position on major policy issues on its official website and through the match day programme.

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

The Shrimpers Trust hold meetings regularly to discuss any issues arising at the Club. In conjunction with regulation 112, in addition the club will endeavour to hold two meetings per season that will be open to all supporters in order for them to discuss any significant issues relating to the Club. These will be advertised both on our website and via social media.

### **Fan meetings:**

The Club host regular meetings, which are minuted, with representatives of the Shrimpers Trust and Fan groups. These meetings operate with an agenda set by the Trust. In attendance at these meetings are at least one of the following:

- Club's Commercial Manager
- Head of Finance

The Shrimpers Trust and representatives of the Fan groups encourage other fans to provide feedback, complaints and suggestions ahead of the meeting. Furthermore, the Club operates a policy of encouraging fan feedback and Club officers are visible on all match days at Roots Hall. The Club also responds within reasonable time to related queries raised via social media.

The Club's Commercial Director also meets at least twice a year with other representatives of other fan groups. These meetings encourage a two-way dialogue between Club and fans on a variety of relevant subject matter including stadium facilities, fan engagement and team performance.

Supporters are encouraged to contact the Club with any ideas or suggestions that they may have to further enhance the supporter experience at Roots Hall.

## **SUPPORTER CONDUCT**

The Club wants supporters to be a part of the passion here at Roots Hall in a safe, secure and enjoyable environment. The Club is therefore committed to preventing supporters from behaving in a manner likely to jeopardise the safety or enjoyment of others. The Club will not tolerate any harassment or other discriminatory behaviour, whether physical or verbal, towards supporters, Club employees or anyone else working or attending football at Roots Hall.

On match days, if you have any queries or require First Aid please do not hesitate to contact one of the many stewards in the stadium who will assist as required. There are two First Aid stations – in the South East Corner and the middle of the East Stand.

## **Bans & Appeals**

Fans that choose not to adhere to the Fans Code of Conduct provisions or behave in an inappropriate manner, bringing the Club into disrepute may be ejected and/or banned from Roots Hall. Such fans may receive a ban or loss of season ticket. In extreme cases fans may be subject to arrest by the police.

All Club bans can be appealed in writing, within 14 days of notification, by contacting Mr Patrick van der Waag, Stadium Manager, Roots Hall Ground, Victoria Avenue, Southend on seas, SS2 6NQ.

A Fans Code of Conduct has been drawn up for supporters, which is attached to the Charter.

## **TICKETING**

The Ticket Office can be contacted on 08444 770077 or via e-mail at [tickets@southend-united.co.uk](mailto:tickets@southend-united.co.uk). Full details of the ticketing terms and conditions, including refunds, supporters with disabilities and postponements and abandonments, are attached to this Charter and are available upon request from the Ticket Office and can also be found on the Club's website at <http://www.southendunited.co.uk/fans/customer-charter/>.

The Club continues to strive for wider access for supporters to matches by offering a broad range of ticket prices and aims to give the earliest possible notice of any changes to its ticketing policy and the reasons for the changes.

The Club's supporters are allocated tickets dependent upon the match and tickets available. When tickets are limited the Club will endeavour to give priority to regular supporters such as season ticket holders.

With regards away supporters, the Club abides by the EFL Regulations governing the allocation of tickets to visiting clubs and does not charge admission prices to supporters of a visiting club which are higher than those charged to our own supporters for comparable accommodation. Concessionary rates offered to senior citizens, young persons and junior supporters apply to supporters of a visiting Club.

## **Match Abandonment**

The Club's policy on postponed and abandoned games is as follows:

- On the day of the game if the game is postponed before kick-off then ticket holders in the ground will be entitled to a full refund / credit, less any booking fee, or free admission to the rearranged fixture.

- If the game is abandoned after kick off, but before the whistle goes for the commencement of the second half, the ticket holders in the ground will be entitled to a 50% refund / credit on the face value of their ticket or 50% off the admission cost to the rearranged fixture.
- If the game is abandoned after the whistle has gone for the commencement of the second half of the game, then ticket holders in the ground will not be entitled to any concessions in respect of the rearranged fixture.

## **STADIUM**

All supporters who attend Roots Hall must adhere to the EFL Ground Regulations and the Club's Ticket Conditions. Copies of the Regulations can be found around the ground, at the Ticket Office, Reception and from the Club's website at <http://www.southendunited.co.uk/fans/customer-charter>.

There is parking available for disabled supporters in the main Roots Hall car park behind the east stand. There are three designated disabled spaces for blue badge holders but extra spaces may be made available subject to availability. Directions and assistance where required will be given by stewards to the wheelchair spaces in the west stand. Access from the east to west stand is generally flat with some ramps. All disabled supporters are advised to contact the ground before a match day in order to arrange their tickets as Roots Hall is an old stadium that has been adapted where possible for disabled supporters but spaces are very limited.

Roots Hall is an old stadium but does have catering outlets in each of the stands. No food is to be bought into the stadium, that has not been purchased from our food retail outlets. Feedback and suggestions on the catering, food and facilities are welcomed.

## **STEWARDING**

Southend United is fully committed to the welfare and safety of spectators attending Roots Hall on matchdays and we strive to make visits to the ground a pleasurable and enjoyable experience for all concerned. We are a football club with firm family values and our aim is to eradicate anti-social behavior which causes offence. All stewards are trained (or undertaking training) to NVQ Level 2 standard in Crowd Control and they are briefed prior to every game to be vigilant for any anti-social behaviour. Stewards are instructed to deal with any offence that disrupts the enjoyment of others or contravenes stadium regulations which are displayed in various areas around the ground.

Peter Lee is the Safety and Stadium Officer and is in charge of matchday operations.

## **HOSPITALITY**

There is hospitality available at the stadium in the various lounges and Hospitality Boxes. Any supporters wishing to avail themselves of these facilities should contact the Commercial Department on [commercial@southend-united.co.uk](mailto:commercial@southend-united.co.uk).

As above, feedback and suggestions on the catering food and facilities are welcomed.

## **Clubs Digital Channels**

**Website:** [www.southendunited.co.uk](http://www.southendunited.co.uk)

**Twitter:** @SUFCRootsHall

**Facebook:** SouthendUnitedFC

**Instagram:** SUFCRootsHall

## **MERCHANDISE**

Details regarding the Club Shop, including opening hours and returns, can be found at <http://southendutdstore.com>

Details of the next intended change of kits will be available from the Club Shop as soon as it is practicably possible. The Club carries out its obligations under EFL Regulations to prevent price fixing in relation to the sale of replica kit.

## **DATA PROTECTION**

The Club recognises its responsibility with reference to all customer information on our databases. All information is stored confidentially in accordance with GDPR (2018) and no data is issued or sold without prior consent.

## **CLUB LIABILITY**

The Club is not liable for any loss, damage or injury sustained or incurred (howsoever arising) by any individuals or groups of individuals whilst on the Club premises.

This Charter will be reviewed annually and amended as required.

Signed

Amanda Balcomb  
Club Secretary  
June 2020

Attachments:

Ticketing Conditions  
Season Card conditions  
Ground Regulations  
Fans Code of Conduct  
Equality Policy  
Complaints Policy