



Football Supporters' Federation

POLICY

CONTENTS

1. Legal Issues
2. Diversity and Inclusion
3. Football Governance
4. Football Code of Conduct
5. Standing in Football Stadia
6. Ticketing
7. Heritage Issues
8. Miscellaneous:
 - Women's Football
 - Football Stadia Moves
 - Artificial Pitches
 - Player Transfers and Loans
 - Music at Football Matches

LEGAL ISSUES

Introduction

As a guiding principle, the Federation supports efforts to prevent violence at football matches and opposes abuse based on racism, sexism or sexual preference.

Federation is clear that law-abiding match-going fans are not criminals, and should not be treated as such.

We also recognise that, on occasion, sanctions (both civil and criminal) have to be applied to football supporters who have broken the law, or the regulations in force at football grounds. As principle, we believe that these sanctions need to be lawful, proportionate, and fairly and transparently applied and subject to an appropriate right of appeal in accordance with natural justice.

We will work with all interested parties to achieve our policy aims.

Policy Specifics

1. Football Banning Orders

We will work towards the repeal of Section 14B Football Banning Orders.

We recognise that the current tariffs for banning orders are too inflexible to always allow a proportionate response to fans' actions. We oppose the minimum tariff imposed for banning orders and believe that magistrates should have greater discretion in their imposition.

2. Stadium Bans

We recognise that football stadia are private property and the owners have rights to prevent and control access to their property. However, we believe that any disciplinary action taken by clubs should be manifestly fair and open to challenge.

In particular, we believe that the administration of local club supporter bans should include local assessors and follow due process when being considered.

3. Consumption of Alcohol

We believe that it is inappropriate that consumption of alcohol regulations should be different for football, compared with other sports.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Introduction

The FSF represents, and welcomes into membership, all supporters, irrespective of gender, race, creed, physical abilities or sexual orientation. We believe that a single, strong, united national supporters' organisation is the best way of representing the interests of all groups of supporters. We recognise that for some supporters parity of match-going experience is not yet always a reality. We re-affirm our commitment to continue to work in this field, giving assistance on any issues concerning diversity and inclusion to any supporter, fans' group, football club or similar.

Policy Specifics

Relations with other organisations active in this field

FSF will:

- accept and discharge its responsibilities in this area directly, rather than rely on other organisations to fulfil our mandate.
- campaign jointly with Pride in Football on issues specifically related to LGBT football, and support the Fans for Diversity campaign by promoting it within the work of the FSF.

Facilities for Disabled Football Supporters

A national task force to be established - to cover all types of event venue and all generic forms of disability - to test and measure disabled facilities on a matchday or at a live event. The task force should seek the views and experiences of disabled people, their carers and advocates. The resulting report should be published with recommendations and measurable time line for improvements of five years.

Homophobia

The Federation will:

- continue to establish and develop links with the LGBT communities.
- work towards defining guidelines for acceptable and offensive 'banter' and chants.
- ask football and policing authorities to publish specific figures for homophobic arrests at football games.
- encourage all affiliates to use the expertise of #PIF and Football v Homophobia to further strengthen and develop new linkages within the fan community.

FSF representation at diversity discussions

The FSF will:

- seek supporter representation at meetings with the FA, FL, and non-league pyramid at all times in order to establish clear objectives for fans in promoting diversity, and setting appropriate standards in these areas for both clubs and staff.
- be represented by its own diversity representatives at all relevant international world meetings, funded by the Federation.

FOOTBALL GOVERNANCE

Introduction

The Federation supports the establishment and maintenance of a strong, independent, unified and co-ordinated governance of the game with appropriate co-ordination and co-operation between the various governing bodies.

There is also a clear need for appropriate governance controls at club level to ensure fair competition and sustainable clubs.

Policy Specifics

- Minimum standards of governance, administration and financial control must be in place at all clubs as a condition of membership and league entry. This must be appropriately enforced and managed by the governing bodies.
- We support the approval by Parliament of a Sports Law granting governing bodies appropriate and sufficient authority to properly regulate and manage their sports subject to minimum standards of transparency and fairness having particular regard to the impact of competition and employment law on sport.

FOOTBALL CODE OF CONDUCT

Introduction

The FSF deplures illegal activity in the UK in any form.

FSF acknowledges that footballers are role models (whether they like it or not); their high media profile, and the perception that they lead a privileged lifestyle, makes this inevitable. It is also, increasingly, a role demanded of their players by football clubs, with school visits, working with the less privileged etc forming a routine part of the footballer's responsibilities.

We also acknowledge the principal that once someone convicted of a crime has undergone the punishment deemed appropriate by the law, they should have the opportunity for rehabilitation and the chance to lead a normal life. However, we note that this does not imply that they have an automatic right to resume previous employment.

Policy Specifics

In order to ensure that there is clarity on this issue:

- The governing bodies should establish a set of policies, including a clear code of conduct for those associated with the game, which seek to codify the standards of behaviour (in the widest sense) which the game expects those involved to maintain.
- Such policies should also cover appropriate penalties for those failing to achieve the required standards.

STANDING IN FOOTBALL STADIA

Introduction

FSF recognises that the law, as applicable to football stadia of Premier League and Championship clubs (and others in certain conditions), requires the provision of all-seated accommodation for fans.

Historically, some clubs have further inferred from legislation an obligation to require fans to remain seated at all times, and the fact that this law has not been applied in a standard manner has led to confusion and conflict between stewards and supporters.

How clubs manage the behaviour of supporters, their attitudes to where and for how long they are permitted to stand and the actions they take to encourage sitting, is a matter for them, their local Council through the Safety Advisory Group (SAG) and other interested stakeholders, including police and supporters' groups to agree and implement.

FSF believes all supporters should have the choice to stand or sit at football matches and that the legal impediment preventing some clubs from offering designated standing areas should be removed. Where there is demand amongst fans at a club for both standing and sitting, safe, appropriately-designed and designated areas for each should be provided within stadia. The FSF campaigns towards that end.

Policy Specifics

- Support better management of standing within existing all-seated stadia, particularly through the creation of “singing” sections.
- Campaign for the retention of existing standing accommodation where it still exists.
- Encourage and work with clubs to include safe standing areas within new stadia, highlighting the economic benefits as appropriate.
- FSF defines “safe standing areas” as either a) those areas that satisfy the requirements for licensed standing areas as laid out in the SGSA’s Green Guide; or b) those areas that include technology approved, tested and in-use outside of England and Wales, such as rail seating, fold-out seating and other configurations of multi-functional supporter areas.
- Where this technology has not previously been approved for use in England and Wales, FSF is committed to campaigning for small-scale trials of new technology at existing Premier and/or Football League stadia, so as to allow appropriate professional scrutiny from the SGSA and other interested stakeholders.

TICKETING

Introduction

The Federation believes that attendance at football matches should be affordable for all. In particular, specific arrangements should be made to allow young people, the next generation of supporters, to attend games and experience the true atmosphere of a live football match

Policy Specifics:

Away ticket pricing

- Support the Twenty's Plenty campaign to limit the price of all away tickets to £20
- Campaign for suitable maximum away ticket prices for each tier of football
- Encourage clubs to establish reciprocal pricing deals where these are feasible

Categorisation of games

- Oppose the categorisation of games and consequent changes to ticket prices

Data collection

- Establish a ticket prices database to inform all our campaign activities
- Identify and appoint 'Ticketing Representatives' at each club to monitor prices and report to a co-ordinator responsible for maintenance of the database

FA Cup Final and other high-profile games

- Campaign for the reduction of misuse of tickets for all high-profile games, and the FA Cup Final in particular
- Maximise the availability of tickets for such games for the supporters of the clubs taking part

HERITAGE ISSUES

Introduction

Football is our National Game and can be seen as a valuable “brand” by owners and potential owners. Football clubs are attached to the communities in which they based like no other forms of business. Fans do not choose their clubs after comparing prices or being influenced by clever marketing, it is a loyalty that lasts a lifetime. Fans are the people that remain after club owners have moved on and they remain loyal through good times and bad. As such there is a perceived need to protect the history and heritage of our Football Clubs for future generations.

Policy Specifics

The areas to be protected include (but may not be limited to):

- Playing names of clubs
- Playing Strip (Colours and styles)
- Badges and Logos
- Home Ground geographic location

The above items are to be absolutely protected from change by the rules of national governing bodies, who shall allow no changes to any of them without the clear consent of the club’s supporters.

MISCELLANEOUS

Introduction

This section contains those policies which do not fit comfortably in the main categories in this document, or refer to particular items which require only a single policy.

Policy Specifics

Women's Football

The Federation recognises, welcomes and supports the continuing development of women's football, both through the Super League and throughout the women's pyramid.

We also recognise that, at the time of writing, there are few organised supporters' groups active specifically in the women's game. However, we will work with and support these groups as they begin to be formed, and will develop the structure of the Federation in order to best meet the needs of such groups.

In the meantime, policies adopted by FSF for the men's game will apply equally to the women's game until such time as different priorities emerge.

Football Stadia - Moves

Develop clear, legally-enforceable rules to prevent clubs selling or moving from grounds without the explicit prior agreement of their supporters to both the move and the site of any new stadium. Consultation on such moves shall be by properly supervised secret ballot after a period of debate and discussion amongst all stakeholders in the club including fans. Those eligible to vote and other matters associated with such consultation to be set out in an enforceable code of conduct covering proposed ground moves.

Artificial Pitches

Recognising:

- a) the inconvenience and expense caused to fans by match postponements and re-scheduling;
- b) the higher standard of football played when surfaces are good,

The Federation supports the use of artificial pitch surfaces, of at least 3G standards (and suitably maintained, inspected and approved) throughout the pyramid, up to and including the Championship.

Player Transfer and Loans

- Football authorities should audit player transfer payments which involve trigger events which the club concerned has the ability to influence (such as goals scored in the league, or qualification for other competitions such as the Champions League). They should also consider whether monies owed under such clauses should be held by the FA until it has been established that the receipt of such money has not had any effect on a team's performance in competition.
- FSF recognizes the need for a rule which forbids any transfer or loan of a player if there are stipulations that give the club selling or loaning the player the contractual right to influence whether the player is able to play for the club they are moving to in any specific league matches.

Music at Football Matches

- The playing of playing 'celebratory music' at the end of Cup and Play Off Finals is inappropriate and should end.
- The singing of the national anthem should be left to fans and should not be accompanied by professional singers.