

Basingstoke Town Community Football Club

Supporter Behaviour Policy



INTRODUCTION

Behaviour at Basingstoke Town Community Football Club (BTCFC) home matches is governed by BTCFC, existing Ground Regulations (both The Hants FA and BTCFC) and The Football Association (The FA).

This Policy relates to the purchase and use of BTCFC season tickets, matchday tickets and memberships.

Supporters who contravene these regulations can expect to be ejected from The Winklebury Complex and in certain circumstances, be issued with a temporary or permanent ban from all fixtures and matches that are associated with BTCFC.

It is important to note that the breach of Ground Regulations may also constitute a criminal offence (football related offences and football banning orders) and BTCFC will support the police in their enquiries and where necessary, any subsequent prosecution.

We will also look to provide guidance and support to any supporters or other eyewitnesses who report an incident or help to further an investigation. Where a supporter is identified to have breached the Ground Regulations and/or brought the Club's name into disrepute, including in relation to away fixtures, via direct or indirect communications (e.g. email and social media posts), further action will be taken in line with the guidance within this policy.

POLICY STATEMENT

This Policy is compliant with the requirements and principles of the Equality Act 2010 and will be applied accordingly. This Policy also complies with the Premier League (PL) Commitment regarding Discriminatory and Abusive Conduct.

This Policy complements BTCFC Ground Regulations, Conditions of Sale and Membership Terms and Conditions. This Policy supersedes any and all other policies' application of sanctions, as of the date of publication, 07th August 2023.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure the safety of all those associated with football at the Winklebury Football Complex and to enhance the match experience. The loud and passionate support is appreciated by everyone at the club including the players and management and we thank every supporter for their backing of the team.

We urge everyone attending the Winklebury Football Complex to be considerate of other supporters around them and to respect their surroundings. We aim to create a safe and friendly atmosphere at the Winklebury Complex and to provide everyone with a fantastic matchday experience.

The framework of offences and corresponding sanctions alongside the appeals process outlined in this Policy are designed to give supporters clarity on how the BTCFC will deal with offences and the sanctions applied.



GENERAL INFORMATION AND CONDITIONS

1.0 Prohibited Items

The following articles must not be brought within the Ground. Any person in possession of such items will have the item confiscated and/or be refused entry:

- Knives
- Fireworks
- Smoke Canisters/Smoke Grenades
- Air-Horns
- Flares
- Weapons
- Dangerous or hazardous items
- Laser Devices
- Bottles
- Glass Vessels

2.0 League Commitment Regarding Discriminatory and Abusive Conduct

The League and its Clubs condemn discriminatory and abusive conduct in all forms. It has no place within stadia, nor within other interactions and communications between members of the public and Clubs and their staff, whether in person, online (via social media) or otherwise.

The League and its Clubs are committed to ensuring that any individual found to have engaged in discriminatory or abusive conduct is not only prevented from attending League Matches at the stadium of the Club that they support, but all League stadiums.

The League and its Clubs consider that the following behaviour should be captured and, if progressed by a Club and proven, should prevent the individual engaging in such behaviour from attending League matches:

“Any conduct, act or statement, whether express or implied, that is discriminatory by means of race, religion or belief, gender, sexual orientation, disability, colour or national or ethnic origin”.

Where such conduct is directed towards any Club, Club employee (including temporary match-day staff, such as stewards), player, match official or other individual attending a League Match, the behaviour referred to above, will constitute action in the form of a sanction, whether the individual engaging in it, does so within a stadium or otherwise in-person, via any electronic communication, social media or otherwise.

The Club having reviewed our commitment regarding Discriminatory and Abusive Conduct, have outlined all sanctions and sanction processes in line with this Policy.



3.0 Club Ground Regulations

This commitment complements the BTCFC's Ground Regulations, which further details the terms & conditions that all visitors automatically accept in attending the Winklebury Complex and relevant owned locations.

4.0 Sanction Conditions and Structure

Any period of suspension or ban will apply to all BTCFC matches and premises as well as participation in any competitions or events it organises or is involved in and the right to access or purchase tickets, membership or experiences.

There will be no refunds of any monies paid for periods of ejection, suspension following an imposed ban, unless overturned on appeal.

4.1 Sanctions

The following breakdowns are a guide for how BTCFC will treat behavioural, discriminatory and ticketing offences. We appreciate that no two incidents are the same. The BTCFC Board will consider all available evidence when dealing with incidents and determining the length of a ban, if applicable.

We reserve the right to suspend a supporter's account whilst an investigation takes place. Supporters are also advised that:

- Bans may carry over from one season to the next.
- Sanctions apply to all fixtures and matches that are associated with BTCFC.
- Restrictions can remain in place preventing the purchase of away match tickets if offences have been reported to the police or other enforcing authorities where appropriate.

BTCFC sanctions are distinct and will be in addition to any other sanctions imposed by the Police/enforcing authority. The Club will deal with each case on an individual basis and reserves the right to use its discretion within the recommended sanction bands provided.

In cases where proven offences involve aggravating features such as (but not limited to) sustained activity, violence, public nature activity including broadcasted activity, threat, encouraging/inciting others, delay/suspension/abandonment of Match, discriminatory behaviour or where the safety of BTCFC operation is impaired, **BTCFC reserves the right to uplift and/or apply a more significant sanction than outlined below.**

Level	Offence	Sanction
1	Smoking, vaping or drinking alcohol in unauthorised areas	1 - 12 Week Match Ban*
	Refusing to comply with or ignoring Steward instructions, security personnel or law enforcement or BTCFC Officials	
	Unauthorised entry or entry without proper authorisation	
2	Social media misconduct, engaging in online harassment, offensive comments at players, officials, club staff or fellow supporters	13 to 51 Week Match Ban*
	Persistent verbal abuse, verbally abusing players, officials, staff or fellow supporters using profanity, insults or threats	
	Displaying or hanging offensive, discriminatory or inappropriate banners or signs	
	Being heavily intoxicated, causing disturbances or confrontations due to impaired judgment	
	Unruly behaviour or disruptive behaviour that interferes with others' enjoyment of the match or brings the Club into disrepute	
Damage to property, vandalising or damaging stadium facilities or equipment or private property		
3	Possession of a dangerous item, bringing weapons, sharp objects or other dangerous items into the stadium, such as illegal substances	Minimum 1 Year Ban*
	Inciting violence, encouraging or inciting violence, aggression or hatred among fellow supporters or against opposing fans	
	Entering the field of play without authorisation, disrupting the game, potentially endangering players and officials.	
	Throwing objects at players, officials or fellow supporters which could pose a safety hazard.	
4	Violence or aggression, engaging in physical altercations, fights or aggressive behaviour towards other fans, players, officials or staff.	Minimum 2 Year Ban*
	Using racially insensitive, discriminatory or offensive language, gestures or actions towards individuals or groups (including social media platforms).	
	Use of flares and smoke bombs or pyrotechnic devices inside the stadium, which could create a dangerous environment.	
5	Disobeying bans, attending matches while under a previous ban or suspension.	Indefinite Ban*
	Physically assaulting players, coaches, staff or match officials before, during or after the match.	

*Sanctions are guidelines only and the ultimate discretion lies with BTCFC Board.



Please be aware that the BTCFC will publicise, where necessary, details of individuals and the ban that has been implemented, with other Clubs to enforce the sanctions across all league grounds.

5.0 Sanction Process

5.1 Sanction Statement:

Please note that BTCFC will, wherever practical, follow the sanction process detailed in this section. However, should the initial evidence related to the incident be conclusive we reserve the right to confirm the offence and appropriate sanction to be applied in one communication.

5.2 Investigation and Offence

Following an investigation into any alleged prohibited activity or alleged offence committed and whether resulting in an ejection or not, BTCFC will draw on a range of home and away CI sources, including but not limited to:

- CCTV footage and/or other video/audio recordings (i.e. mobile phone footage).
- Social Media Posts.
- Steward, Officials, Staff, Player and Supporter witness statements.

The individual(s) in question will receive from BTCFC a written notice of the "Offence" to be applied with the rationale evidenced. They will be referred to this Policy from that point and confirmation of a 'temporary' ban and its terms will be given.

5.3 Right to Reply to an Offence and/or Sanction

BTCFC will provide written notice of the offence and the sanction to be applied.

The person committing the offence has the right to reply to a Sanction, which will be reviewed and agreed by BTCFC Board and all reasonable arguments will be considered.

If no reply is received, BTCFC will deem the charge to be proven.

6.0 Repeat Offences

These Sanctions are to be enforced on the first offence. If a supporter has repeated an offence, the sanction will be more significant.

7.0 Social Media

Where identifiable individuals are using discriminatory language about BTCFC managed social media and contact platforms, it will be treated as if the offence has been committed at Winklebury Football Complex or any other BTCFC premises.

The Club will insist that any supporter found to have directed discriminatory abuse will still be subject to the table within Section 4.1.