



Reading Football Supporters' Society Limited,  
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## **TICKETING AND ACCESSIBILITY POLICY**

| <b>Date of Review</b> | <b>Reason for review</b> | <b>Amendments</b>                 |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 09/05/2013            | New Policy Approved      | Not Applicable                    |
| 07/05/2014            | Periodic Review          | Minor amendments                  |
| 09/02/2017            | Periodic Review          | Revised Format and Updated Policy |
| 12/03/2020            | Periodic Review          | Revised para. 3.8                 |
| 03/08/2022            | Periodic Review          | Registered Office                 |

### **1. Introduction**

This document is drafted in accordance with the Rules of Reading Football Supporters' Society Limited and sets out the Policy towards RFC Ticketing and Accessibility adopted pursuant to a resolution at a Board Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2013.

### **2. Definitions**

Definitions of the terms used in this policy are laid out in a separate Definition of Terms document, which should be read in conjunction with this policy.

### **3. Policy**

This policy has been adopted by STAR to outline principles it considers should be incorporated into all ticketing policies introduced by Reading FC ('the Club'). The policy will act as a "blueprint" in STAR's discussion with the Club on ticketing matters.

STAR believes that attendance at live football matches should be as accessible as possible to all sectors of the community. Therefore, it considers that competitively-priced tickets should be made available to as many supporters as possible.

### 3.1. Match & Season Ticket Prices

Should represent a fair price to reflect the league and division in which the team is playing and so should be reassessed properly in the event of either promotion or relegation.

#### (a) Reward Season Ticketholder Loyalty

Season Ticketholders should be rewarded proportionately for their long-term financial commitment to the Club. Upon promotion, STAR would not necessarily object to Season Ticket price increases, as long as proportionate discounts were available for existing Season Ticketholders.

STAR suggests that three levels of discount are applied depending upon the length of time that Season Ticketholders have held their Season Ticket, as below:

- 2 full seasons or longer = high discount;
- 1 full season = medium discount;
- Half-season = low discount.

#### (b) Reward Match Ticketholder Loyalty

STAR recognises that home supporters attend matches to watch Reading FC play, irrespective of opposition. Although STAR understands that it is a commercial fact of life that the Club may want to categorise matches by likely demand for tickets and price accordingly, It considers that it is unfair that frequently-attending, loyal supporters who do not have Season Tickets should be required to pay considerably more for certain matches than for others. We would therefore ask the Club to introduce a similar discount scheme for individual match day ticketholders based on bandings of Royalty Points holdings, the aim being to equalise as far as possible the price of a ticket for any match for a demonstrably loyal supporter.

#### (c) Pricing of Tickets for Away Supporters

This applies both to Royals supporters at away grounds and visiting supporters to the Madejski Stadium.

STAR supports the principle of the Football Supporters' Federation's "Twenty's Plenty" campaign calling upon football clubs at all levels of the game to recognise and reward the amazing contribution of away fans by agreeing an across-the-board price cap on away match tickets. Whilst it considers that Reading FC should not charge visiting supporters more than £20 for their ticket and welcomes the initiative it put in place for the 2016/17 season, it should also encourage other clubs to reciprocate.

### 3.2. Provide a Scheme to Buy Back or Sell On Unused Tickets

STAR has previously encouraged the Club to introduce a “Buy Back Scheme”, so that Season Ticketholders unable to attend a game might notify the Club and have their ticket re-sold, to ensure as many seats as possible are available for sale.

Should the Club introduce such a scheme, it should ensure that the right safeguards are introduced to prevent profiteering and ticket touting.

### 3.3. Minimise Ticket Abuse

- Rigorously check abuse of concession Season Tickets at all turnstiles and take punitive action against genuine abusers.
- Limit the number of occasions that Concession Season Tickets can be upgraded.

### 3.4. Cup and Other Competitive Matches

Season Ticketholders should have the right, but not the obligation, to purchase a ticket for their normal Season Ticket seat for Cup and other competitive matches (e.g. play-off matches) in advance of tickets for the fixture going on general sale.

### 3.5. Provide Away Season Tickets

Allow the purchase of Away Season Tickets, where holders commit to purchase tickets for all away games.

- Sell a limited number of Away Season Tickets to avoid a “closed shop” for away games. We suggest a maximum number equal to 75% of the smallest away allocation.
- Ensure a minimum “Royalty Points” threshold for Away Season Ticketholders.
- Ensure that Away Season Ticketholders have the right, but not the obligation, to purchase tickets for away Cup and other competitive games.
- Strictly enforce a minimum number of “opt-outs” per person.

### 3.6. Provide “Exiles” Season Tickets.

Allow the purchase of Away Season Tickets, where bona-fide “exiles” groups can commit to purchase tickets for a specified number of away games.

### 3.7. Ensure Fair Ticket Allocations

- Use “Royalty Points” as far as possible to allocate tickets to high-demand games.
- Categorise points bandings as small as practicable to spread demand.
- Notwithstanding the above, provide a system where certain supporters without Royalty Points (e.g. families, remote supporters, other special cases, etc.) still have a chance to obtain tickets.

### 3.8. Print at Home and Smartphone Tickets

- Print at home and Smartphone tickets should be encouraged as an option for convenience.

### 3.9. Minimise Barriers to Ticket Purchase

- Ensure that the Ticket Office has sufficient trained staff to meet normal levels of demand.
- Make available alternative methods of purchasing tickets to counter or telephone purchase. (On-line ticket purchasing is now a generally successful alternative for the Club.)
- Have a Direct Debit or finance scheme to spread the payment of Season Ticket cost.
- Publish (either directly or via STAR) telephone statistics to show usage peaks and troughs, average queue lengths and waiting times, etc.
- Provide a reliable method of communicating with the Ticket Office to resolve problems or disputes.

## 4. Review

This policy will be reviewed by STAR’s Board biennially, but members may call for it to be reviewed at any time by contacting the Secretary.