

# Wimbledon Independent Supporters Association

## Annual General Meeting

Wimbledon Community Centre, St. George's Road, Wimbledon  
Thursday 1 May, 2003 at 7.30 pm

### MINUTES

#### 1: INTRODUCTION

Nicole Hammond announced that the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary book was on sale at the meeting. In addition, it was announced that tickets for both the Reading Town away game and coach tickets for the match were still available.

#### 2: APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from the following people: Joe Blair, Dave Boyle, Roger Dennis, Joanne Fotheringham, Mags Hutchinson, Mary Jones, Mark & Jo Lewis, Ross Maclagan, Colette Mulchrone, Mike O'Shaughnessy, Trevor Pearce, Ken Richens, Aideen Rochford, Dan Stern, Kris Stewart, Jill Stratton and Lee Willett.

#### 3: MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

It was pointed out by Ian Pollock that the cost of producing the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary book, due to extra material and layout factors, was above what was agreed at the last OGM (6 March 2003). The total budget was £5,214, with 1,000 being printed, to be sold at £10 each, thus ensuring that WISA breaks even if 521 are sold. Profits on the extra sold were to be given to the stadium fund. It was agreed to put approval for this additional spending to a vote, which was unanimously approved.

#### 4: MEMBERSHIP FEES

It was agreed to keep the current membership fees the same, ie:

Adult £5  
Concessions £3  
Household £10  
Life £100

#### 5: TREASURER'S REPORT / EXAMINERS OF ACCOUNTS

Mike O'Shaughnessy and Trevor Pearce both issued apologies for their absence. Both sent the following statements via email:

Mike O'Shaughnessy : *Just to say that I'm losing the work battle and will not now be able to make the WISA AGM tomorrow (it's my firm's year end). Trevor Pearce and I were to give the audit report. With much help from Peter Bowles, I have reviewed the figures for year to 31st August 2002 and the bank balances at the year end and they look fine to me. I am happy to*

endorse them. I can also confirm that I am happy to remain as auditor (if you want me to) for the following year.

Trevor Pearce : *Just to say that I can't make the AGM, but I've examined the accounts in my position as examiner for the 2001/2 accounts, and I'm happy that they are accurate as published. If you need any more from me then let me know. I'm happy to do this for next year if I'm eligible and if no-one else volunteers.*

Sean Fox stated that essentially it was as on the accounts except we had £208 extra in for March in standing orders. Sean Fox also stated that he had discovered a discrepancy in the accounts of £613 to WISA's benefit but was not proposing to write this on until auditors were satisfied it was correct.

All expenditure over £500 had been pre -approved by meetings as it was for the questionnaire and sponsorship. Meetings had already approved additional expenditure on book.

Balances as of meeting stood at £10973.17 although there remained some outstanding liabilities for the book.

Mike O'Shaughnessy and Trevor Pearce were both unanimously voted as Examiners of Accounts again.

## 6: ELECTION OF COMMITTEE

Thanks were issued to those stepping down from the WISA Committee, namely Lee Willett, Kevin Rye, Richard McGregor and Charlie Talbot.

It was announced that it was not a full committee, and there will be an OGM in due course to formally replace the Vice Chair position.

It was agreed to have an Acting Vice Chair and Club Liaison Officer until the OGM, for this purpose Charlie Bell (as Vice Chair) and Sean Fox (as joint Club Liaison Officer and Treasurer) were voted in unopposed.

The Chair, Nicole Hammond, was voted in again unanimously.

It was decided that due to there being no formal contesting of the positions, all positions were to be taken en bloc on a single vote, which saw unanimous approval.

The committee was duly elected thus:

Chair	Nicole Hammond	
Vice Chair	Charlie Bell (acting)	
Secretary	Colette Mulchrone	
Treasurer	Sean Fox	
Publicity Officer	Dave Boyle	
Webmaster	Ronan Warde	
Membership Secretary	Mags Hutchinson	
Newsletter Editor	Simon Wheeler	
Club Liaison Officer	Sean Fox (acting)	
General Committee	Joe Blair	Laurence Lowne
	Matt Couper	Ross Maclagan
	Robert Dunford	Gail Moss
	Marc Jones	Ian Pollock
	Mark Lewis	

## 7: MOTION

There were two motions proposed at the meeting:

Proposal A, proposed by Martin Drake, seconded by Kevin Rye:

*'I propose that WISA transfer £2,500 of its current funds to the Dons Trust Ground Fund to facilitate the purchase of Kingsmeadow. This money should either be a straight donation or be used to purchase either shares or bonds for WISA to own.'*

Proposal B, proposed by the WISA Committee:

*"That a sum of £2,500 or similar amount as approved by the membership be used to fund a number of initiatives and activities through our network of contacts at football clubs, both on a local and national basis, to complement the work being undertaken by TBWA and in addition look to support the Dons Trust with activities for fundraising, primarily in the local areas of Merton, Kingston and Sutton. The WISA Committee believes the return on investment to be far more beneficial and expect to exceed the sum of £2,500 initially proposed.'*

Questions were invited from the floor:

Why was a figure of £2,500 considered when it was thought to be too low? Sean Fox replied that spending £2,500 would be considered not prudent as donations were less due to the Ground Fund, and activities such as the WISA Questionnaire and mailshots often cost £1,000.

Concerns were expressed that Proposal B was "gambling" with no guaranteed return. Questions were asked what sort of initiatives were being planned. Simon Wheeler responded that bucket collections were not totally effective. Having spoken to supporters representatives of Manchester United and Liverpool, joint badges/t-shirts as seen at CCL games this season would probably be the most popular (and profitable) form of fundraising.

An idea from the floor stating that linkups with local youth clubs with regards to exposure was noted.

WISA were asked whether it could buy shares in any share issue? Sean Fox pointed out that WISA did not exist as an entity, though there are ways around this issue.

It was pointed out by Ronan Warde that Proposal A could be looked at later in the season. The principle behind Proposal B was that to make money, it is necessary to have money, the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary book a case in point

It was suggested from the floor that a split of proposed funding between a donation now (£1,000 was suggested) and the principles behind Proposal B was to be adopted.

A question was asked what was to be done in the immediate future, as waiting for the next OGM would be considered too long (3 months). It was also suggested that anything performed must be in tandem with AFCW/TBWA. Nicole Hammond responded that the Dons Trust are fully aware of ideas.

A comment from the floor suggested that a target of £5,000 or £10,000 be set to encourage more fundraising. A telethon style campaign could be launched along with Fulham

It was asked who would be getting the money collected. Sean Fox replied that it will benefit the football club. A constitutional point was brought up, to which Sean Fox stated that it was up to the members to decide how to spend the money.

It was pointed out by Ronan Warde that members voted to change allegiance to AFC Wimbledon at a previous meeting. Sean Fox stated that although this was the case there was no formal altering of the constitution.

WISA were asked about holding shares "in trust". Sean Fox stated that at the time it was unclear how this could be done, but stated it would need a change in the constitution. This would be looked into before the next OGM.

Marc Jones stated that TBWA may not be in a position to "follow through" their campaign to all League clubs, which is where WISA's contacts would be beneficial.

WISA were asked about current fundraising activities. Nicole Hammond said that there was not at that moment, but would be considered in due course.

A proposal put forward by Robert Dunford and seconded by Stuart Young (Proposal C) suggested a splitting of the proposed funding into a £1,000 donation at some point and spending an additional £2,000 on fundraising activities.

Simon Wheeler stated that the money would not be spent immediately

It was suggested from the floor that reserving some profit made could be used to reinvest in more fundraising activities, which was noted.

Marc Jones pointed out that it was impossible to recoup major publicity, though it would help with the Ground Fund (namely that WISA may not see any financial return but the Ground Fund would).

WISA would be doing an internal examination on specific targets for fundraising, though all agreed that the arbitrary target is £3m.

The motions were put to the floor:

Proposal A received no votes

Proposal B received over 50% of the vote and was therefore carried

Proposal C was subsequently not voted on

## 8: UPDATE ON ACTIVITIES

WISA's dealings with the IFC were explained, with a series of letters being sent to the Football League and the Football Association. The conclusion made was that no rules were broken but needed to be tightened. All future FA Commissions were to be transparent.

All correspondence was to be made available on request.

Simon Wheeler detailed future WISA fundraisers and activities:

4<sup>th</sup> May 2003 : no formal WISA protest at Selhurst Park as it was felt there was not much more to achieve. Instead, a drink and kickabout with Burnley fans at the Hand In Hand at Wimbledon was to take place at the same time as the Burnley game.

28<sup>th</sup> May 2003 : A gathering at the FA Headquarters in Soho Square was planned, with a symbolic "divorce paper" being handed over, symbolising the divorce between the supporters and Wimbledon FC.

30<sup>th</sup> May 2003 : A night out at Jaspers in Wimbledon, tickets available, disco and food available, all proceeds to Ground Fund.

The WISA questionnaire had hundreds of responses, the data was currently still being collated. Those completed by WISA members were to be separated and used for the impending constitutional review.

Sean Fox stated that there will be a draft proposal available well in advance, with Aims and Objectives being main priority.

Charlie Bell stated that 300 returns thus far, or 25% of the WISA membership, was a good sample. Another 822 were still to be processed. The delay in publishing full results was delayed due to verification difficulties with WISA membership. It was envisioned that the final questionnaire document would be between 40 and 50 pages long.

It was suggested that there would be another WISA questionnaire next year.

## 9: AFC WIMBLEDON ISSUES

Erik Samuelson and Trevor Williams were the representatives from AFC Wimbledon.

Erik stated that the contract for Kingsmeadow would be exchanged on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2003, ensuring that all money made from the bar would be for AFC Wimbledon from that date. The timescale for purchase has been extended, effectively meaning no end date to buy Ks. The Kholsas have shaken hands on the deal, though other people have expressed interest. Ron Noades still has an ability to bid for Kingsmeadow but must do so by 31<sup>st</sup> May 2003. There is a fallback option through a major bank.

The TBWA launch is scheduled for "mid-June", around the same time as the major share issue launch.

Marc Jones asked whether this loosening of the purchase-by date would affect TBWA's direction. Erik stated it should not have much effect.

It was asked what the shares were being sold in. Erik responded that fans of many clubs were consulted to see what would entice people. An external party made the suggestion that the name of the club would be the major selling point, not the ground or the club itself. Therefore, it was proposed to set up a separate stadium fund company, and shares would be sold in that company.

When asked whether the Dons Trust members should be consulted further, Erik replied that the Dons Trust believed it had a mandate through the Finance Working Group and the Dons Trust SGM on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2003. If the exchange of contracts did not go through on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2003 the whole deal could be scuppered.

It was stressed by Erik that the fans would still own the club, as the proposed share issue would be weighted 4:1 in the favour of the Dons Trust board. The board would also have the power to

“direct” or dismiss individual shareholders or organisations.

It was felt that a bigger risk to future Dons Trust activities would be through a party or parties joining the Dons Trust en masse, and it cannot be made totally watertight.

The proposed makeup of the share issue would be 24% available to external shareholders, though it was perceived that the real take-up would only amount to 10% as not all external shares will be purchased.

Could the ground be “locked” with the club? Erik said that he was unsure, may be able to put extra restrictions on the stadium use, but this would need to be done before the share issue launch.

On the question of handouts before any future open meetings, it was stated that the main problem was to give as much information out as possible to satisfy people without revealing too much.

Some safeguards to prevent any potential hostile takeover were already in place, though Erik agreed that a review would be needed. The Dons Trust has the right to refuse membership to anyone.

Ronan Warde asked about the current donation levels. Ron Trayhorn stated that between £650,000 and £700,000 had been pledged, while £37,000 had been raised in actual cash. Erik stated that pledges could reach £1m. Ron pointed out that there are about 5 new members a week joining the Dons Trust, though if there was a situation where 10 or more were joining per week, a review would be made.

A question from the floor regarding the cost of shares was made. Erik stated that there may be similarities between the AFC Wimbledon share issue and the British Gas share issue, where those who bought less than 100 shares got more than they expected, those buying 100-200 shares would get 90% of their allocation and so on

## 10: ANNOUNCEMENTS / ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary book, the Jaspers event on the 30<sup>th</sup> May and Reading Town ticket availability was mentioned again

A plea was made for people not to invade the pitch at the end of the Raynes Park Vale game at Kingsmeadow.

When asked about what WISA was planning to do for the first game in Milton Keynes, Nicole Hammond stated that it was in hand.

It was announced that there would be an AFC Wimbledon calendar available for next season.

## END OF MEETING

Many people retired to local hostelrys