

West Ham United Independent Supporters' Committee

Supporter Representation Guide

The West Ham United Independent Supporters' Committee has been created by West Ham United supporter groups coming together and agreeing to form a committee which the Club will recognise and work with in order to strengthen the relationship between West Ham United FC and its supporters to ensure West Ham United provides a model of transparent and sustainable governance.

The Supporters' Committee will provide a regular channel of communication and consultation between the Club and its fan/community base. It is designed to be inclusive and to represent the full demographic range of the Club's supporter base, to whom it is accountable. The Supporters' Committee may table matters relating to Club decisions, challenging them where necessary. It is therefore important that Supporters' Committee members represent the best interests of West Ham supporters at all times and should be prepared to raise and share the views of the fanbase.

Expectations of Supporters' Committee Members:

All supporter representatives will need to represent their members effectively by:

- Belonging to their area/group of representation by membership for each season they are on the committee, and throughout their term of office.
- Attending all supporters' committee meetings, subject to exceptional circumstances and, in such absence, ensure your items are passed to the Club and fellow representative/s for raising at any meetings.
 - There is an expectation that the club would not call a meeting at short notice unless it was to discuss a particularly urgent and unexpected item.
- Submitting items/questions on behalf of your area/group to help inform the agenda at meetings.
- Possessing strong communication skills with a willingness to speak and share the views of the supporters you represent at meetings.
- Being available to meet with the Club and Supporters' Committee members outside of meetings as and when reasonable.
- Raising urgent fan issues, feedback or complaints with the Supporter Service department when necessary.
- Acting as a representative and as the main point of contact for supporters to raise issues or concerns directly with fellow Supporters' Committeemembers or the Club.
- Providing feedback to fans following supporters' meetings.
- Respecting the confidentiality of the ISC and not sharing confidential information representatives may be party to.
- Respecting all members of the ISC, including no social media or public comments regarding specific members or the groups they represent

Supporters' Committee members will need to preserve the integrity of the Memorandum of Understanding and the Equality and Diversity statement at all times.

The founding members of the ISC have agreed that an element of solidarity across supporter groups is key to the long-term success of the ISC. Although it recognises that representatives will not always agree, it is important that they acknowledge opposing groups and their members. Further that each group plays an important role in represent elements of the fan base and as such the founding members have stated that should structured dialogue with any group be withdrawn by the club then this might endanger the continuation of the ISC, as if the other groups believe it to be unreasonable they will remove their support.

Make up of Supporters Committee

The founding formation of the ISB is determined in the MOU, all future seasons the representation will be determined as follows.

- A maximum of 14 members comprised of:

A democratically elected representative of:-

- Away season ticket holders
- Claret Members
- Bond holders
- A maximum of six independent supporter groups
- A maximum of three independent diversity groups

Each nominating its own member will be expected to name their representative for the season by July 20th each year. It will also be possible to name a deputy should they be unable to attend a specific meeting, the deputy must also adhere to all guidelines.

There will also be an elected Chair & Vice Chair taken from the Committee members.

Term of Office

1. Away Season Ticket Holders, Claret members (2 season term)
2. Supporters groups will nominate their representative at the start of each season
3. Bond holders will nominate their representative at the start of each season
4. Chairperson & Vice Chair (1 season terms)

NB. There will be no limit on the re-selection of any member

Democratic application and election process

Those not representing existing supporter clubs will be subject to an election process, the process of application, nomination and election of supporter representatives are all hosted and operated independently of West Ham United Football Club via an external company instructed and paid by WHUFC. The Football Supporters Association (FSA) will have prominent branding of the election process and provide a scrutineer to act during the election process. Each elected representative will be voted in by an electorate made up from the group they represent.

The election of supporter representatives is via a first-past-the-post system, meaning the candidate with the highest number of votes wins. All votes are independently counted and verified. If there is a tie lots will be drawn.

Anyone wishing to stand for Chair or Vice Chair must have already been appointed to the committee for the forthcoming year. The election for Chair & Vice Chair will be from an electorate made up from all season ticket holders, away season ticket holders and members. Any person appearing in multiple groups will only be allowed a single vote. Clearly the election of Chair will need to happen after the new season's committee is confirmed but prior to its first meeting. The person receiving the most votes will be appointed Chair, the person in second place appointed Vice-Chair. In light of a tie the other committee members will hold a deciding vote, if that also creates a tie lots will be drawn.

Process for Elected Supporter Representatives

Supporters can apply to stand for election within their area of representation by completing an application form .

The areas of representation are:

1. Away Season Ticket Holders
2. Claret members

If the supporter with the highest number of votes is unable to fulfil their position on the Supporters' Committee, the position will be offered to the candidate with the next highest number of votes, until the position is fulfilled.

Application for elected supporter representatives

Supporters wishing to stand for election as a supporter representative will need to complete all areas of the application form. They must be nominated by a minimum of (2) two other supporters within their area of representation. The election company and the club will ensure all data privacy guidelines are adhered to during the election process.

Upon application, supporter representatives agree that they are committed to being directly contactable by email (must supply their own email address) by fellow supporters in order to:

- Raise the relevant subject matters and questions on behalf of the supporters they represent at meetings.
- Liaise with the Supporter Services team in respect of everyday issues, feedback or complaints that require the assistance of the Club.

Upon application, supporter representatives will be giving consent that their email address, picture, name, biography and election address can be shared publicly as part of the election process.

The Election Services website will be AA accessibility rated. Should a supporter require assistance the company will provide appropriate support.

Process for supporters' group representatives

A number of positions on the Supporters' Committee are reserved for West Ham United supporters' groups that have been in existence for at least 18 months and are able to adhere to a number of basic criteria. Each group is responsible for independently electing their own supporter representative, subject to the Code of Conduct.

Any West Ham United supporters' groups who hold affiliate status with the Football Supporters' Association (FSA) will be given first priority to join the Supporters' Committee, with second priority going to FSA associate members who operate democratically, independently and with a formal constitution. The process will refer to the FSA in relation to providing updates on both associate and affiliate status and will only accept the membership status provided by them.

Any equality groups with a formal constitution and a democratically elected committee will be able to apply for either one of the diversity seats on the Supporters' Committee or an FSA affiliate/associate position.

Applications from supporters' groups are listed under two separate processes, Section 1 and Section 2, as outlined below.

Section 1 - Supporters groups connected to the Football Supporters' Association

Priority will be granted to supporters' groups who apply in the following order:

- 1 a)** FSA affiliate West Ham United supporters' groups
- 1 b)** FSA associate West Ham United supporters' groups
- 1 c)** Any other group (FSA connected or otherwise) accepted by majority vote of Supporters' Committee

Should the number of applicant groups exceed six, the order above will be utilised, should numbers within a particular category still be too high priority will be determined by membership numbers of the groups. This ranking will be determined by the FSA. Any group wishing to apply to be part of the ISC must make all relevant membership information available on request to the FSA.

Section 2 - Supporters groups with a focus on equality and diversity

Priority will be given to ensure that a fair mix of representation across the protected characteristics are provided. A limit of three diversity groups is set - should more than three groups apply there will be an initial opportunity for those groups to decide if they can determine which three members might best be able to represent them as a group. If that is not possible priority will be determined by membership numbers of the groups. This ranking will be determined by the FSA. Any group wishing to apply to be part of the ISC must make all relevant membership information available on request to the FSA.

Alternatively it may be that a group could be granted a space via the FSA affiliated ISA route, and as final option the Supporters' Committee would have the power to vote by majority in order to invite these groups to attend ISC meetings as either full members or observers in order to encourage wider representation

Code of Conduct

Applications for the Supporters' Committee are open to all West Ham United supporters and supporters' groups. However, applications may be declined if the applicant or representative is:

- Under investigation for any breach of stadium regulations or matters concerning the Police that relate to football
- Currently serving a football, Club or stadium related ban
- In arrears of any payments to West Ham United Football Club Ltd
- Found to have behaved in a manner that breaches the Code of Conduct or Equality and Diversity Statement.

Profiles and contact information

Supporter representatives will have a public profile on West Ham United channels, so that supporters know who they should contact to have their views or enquiries raised either at meetings or directly with the Club.

Supporter representatives will be contactable by fellow supporters through their personal email address, submitted upon application.

Chairing meetings

Meetings will be chaired by the elected chair, and/or if requested by the committee representative from the FSA. The Committee may also invite the FSA to observe a meeting but an FSA representative is not essential to the meeting and not considered to be part of the Committee, only to assist on request.