

# **Plymouth Argyle**

## **Football Club**



## **Disability Policy**

If you have any questions or wish to discuss any of the policy with us, or have any specific medical requirements please contact our Disability Liaison Officer (DLO), Nikki Francis on [nikki.francis@pafc.co.uk](mailto:nikki.francis@pafc.co.uk) (07737002262).

### **INTRODUCTION**

Plymouth Argyle Football Club fully supports the principle of equal opportunities and oppose all forms of unlawful or unfair discrimination on the grounds of disability. Our aim is to match the match-day experience as enjoyable and inclusive for all supporters.

### **EQUALITY ACT (2010)**

Disability is one of the nine protected characteristic as defined by the Equality Act (2010). This act ensures that those sections of the population covered by the legislation will not be discriminated against as follows:

- direct discrimination - treating someone with a protected characteristic less favourably than others
- indirect discrimination - putting rules or arrangements in place that apply to everyone, but that put someone with a protected characteristic at an unfair disadvantage.

Plymouth Argyle Football Club aim to fully comply with both the spirit and provisions of the Act.

### **DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT**

As a fundamental principle, the DDA states that people with disabilities should not be treated "less favourably, without justification" and "reasonable adjustments should be made to make goods, facilities and services accessible." Plymouth Argyle Football Club aim to fully comply with both the spirit and provisions of the Act.

The club recognises that not all of its facilities are fully accessible to its supporters with disabilities and confirms that it is committed to making the necessary reasonable adjustments described by the DDA and its relevant Codes of Practice to ensure full compliance with the legislation.

### **DEFINITION OF A DISABLED SUPPORTER**

For the purposes of this policy the definition of a disabled supporter is: "any person who, because of their disability or impairment, is unable to use ordinary stand seating without contravening Health and Safety regulations, guidelines or policy. Any such person will be considered for use of the designated areas of the stadium in line with the procedures set out in this policy."

A person has a "disability" if he/she has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day to day activities. Plymouth Argyle reserves the right to request "proof of a disability" before issuing any concession.

Such proof shall include:-

- 1) Receipt of Higher rate of Disability living Allowance( Mobility or care component)
- 2) Receipt of Enhanced rate P.I.P (Personal Independence Payment)
- 3) A personal letter from your GP explaining that support is required and why.
- 4)

However, we are happy to consider requests on a case by case basis from those who don't meet the strict criteria. Please contact the ticket office for more details. In most cases our DLO will arrange a personal meeting to discuss any specific needs. Please note the issue and use of carers tickets are closely monitored and may require annual reapplication and the club may withdraw at any time if they are misused.

NB: Proof required may change depending on alterations to current legislation regarding the benefit payments system. Receipt of a Blue badge will not be considered sufficient proof of disability. Please note, it is the responsibly of the supporter to inform the club of any changes in their circumstances

## **WHEELCHAIR DEPENDENT SUPPORTERS**

Devonport and Lyndhurst Stands - there are a maximum of 80 spaces for wheelchairs which can be used by home fans. All spaces are at pitch level. These spaces can be purchased by way of season-ticket or on a match-by-match basis. In order to maximise the number of supporters who can access these spaces, the carer's ticket is normally issued for a seat immediately behind the wheelchair bay. For those matches where there is sufficient space, carers are of course very welcome to sit next to the wheelchair bay and Club staff and Stewards had been instructed to be as helpful as possible in facilitating this.

Barn Park Stand (Visiting Supporters) - there are a maximum of 28 spaces for wheelchairs available for visiting supporters. All spaces are at pitch level. All visiting supporters with wheelchairs are situated with their own supporters.

Wheelchair dependent supporters should also be accompanied by a person who is capable of supporting the disabled person's needs in the event of an emergency. For this reason, Plymouth Argyle strongly recommend that this person is sixteen years of age or over and not infirm.

## **AMBULANT DISABLED SUPPORTERS**

Plymouth Argyle are aware that there are considerable numbers of people in the community who use wheelchairs, mainly for outdoors mobility purposes, but are not necessarily confined to their wheelchair. There are also many people suffering severe walking difficulties who may wish to watch a match.

For the purpose of this policy, both categories of people will be termed as 'ambulant disabled supporters'. Those supporters with ambulatory disabilities of a severe nature will be able to have access to seating nearest the entrances/exits.

## **SUPPORTERS WITH INVISIBLE DISABILITIES**

Should you wish to accompany a supporter who suffers from a disability that is less obvious such as Autism, Dementia, Anxiety or Severe Learning Disabilities Plymouth Argyle will strive to offer help specific to the needs of the individual.

## **VISUALLY IMPAIRED SUPPORTERS**

The club has a dedicated audio described commentary service, called Soccer Sight, for its visually impaired supporters. This service is available to home and visiting supporters. The club have 10 headsets available and these can be pre-booked by contacting the DLO. Headsets can then be collected on a match-day from the Club Shop.

They should then be returned to the nearest steward after the match or to the Club Shop. The headsets are able to access the commentary from every part of the ground and the commentary will commence approximately 15 minutes before kick-off. There is no charge for this service.

The club strongly recommends that a person who is fully able to support their needs in the event of an emergency should accompany each visually impaired supporter attending a match.

Assistance Dogs are allowed into the stadium but the club recommend that any supporter wishing to bring an assistance dog contact the DLO at least seven days before the match. Due reference will be given to all aspects of safety and guidance from Guide Dogs for the Blind to ensure safety in the ground. Measures will also be taken to ensure that the welfare of the Assistance Dog is preserved.

## **TICKETING**

All ticketing issues are dealt with by the Ticket Office in the first instance- contact Ticket Office on 01752 907700.

For ticketing issues or complaints that fall outside the Club' set policy please ask to be put in touch with Nikki and she will make contact with you.

## **CAR PARKING FACILITIES**

There is parking available in the Outland Road car park, which is situated directly in front of the stadium. These spaces are available to both home and visiting supporters. There are approximately 30 spaces which are available on a first come, first served basis.

### **Drop-Off Point**

If you are unable to locate disabled parking nearby please contact the DLO on 07737002262 who may be able to arrange to meet, assist and accompany a disabled passenger but unfortunately not a disabled driver.

## **TOILET FACILITIES**

There are specially adapted toilets located in the Devonport, Lyndhurst and Barn Park stands. Each of these toilets is alarmed. Accessible toilets can be accessed with radar keys and stewards hold a spare key if required.

If you experience any problems with the use of the accessible toilets please contact the nearest steward on the day or the club safety officer after the match.

## **STEWARDING**

All stewards are trained to NVQ Level 2 in Spectator Safety. All steward supervisors are currently undertaking assessments for the Level 3 award.

## **MATCH DAY AMBASSADORS**

We also have dedicated match-day ambassadors whose specific role is to enhance the safety and enjoyment of our disabled fans. They are available to offer general assistance to all disabled supporters, and can provide a wheelchair transfer from the car park to your seat if required.

If you require help before or during the match, contact the DLO on 07737002262.

## **CATERING FACILITIES**

Match-day catering is provided in the concourses. Due to the number of people using the concourses pre-match and at half time, the club Ambassadors will also offer assistance in getting refreshments.

## **TRANSPORT TO AWAY MATCHES**

Opportunities for disabled supporters to attend away matches on the club's official coaches are limited due to the facilities available on the coach. It will be the responsibility of the disabled person travelling to ensure that they are accompanied by someone who is fully capable of supporting their needs.

The club cannot undertake to provide 'personal care' or 'moving and handling' assistance to people travelling because of the Health and Safety implications, but will use their best endeavour to assist in whatever way possible

## **ACCESSIBLE MEDIA**

If any visually impaired supporters require alternative formats of club publications, please contact Disability Liaison Officer Nikki Francis, [nikki.francis@pafc.co.uk](mailto:nikki.francis@pafc.co.uk).

Plymouth Argyle Football Club openly welcomes any comments on this policy and would encourage any person to contact the Disability Liaison Officer with their comments or queries.

For more details contact PADSAs. Or the DLO

## **PADSAs**

Plymouth Argyle Disabled Supporters Association is an organisation dedicated to improving the match day experience and enjoyment of all disabled supporters.

PADSAs can be emailed at [padsagroup2015@gmail.com](mailto:padsagroup2015@gmail.com), contacted by phone on 07936542497 or visit the website [www.padsa.co.uk](http://www.padsa.co.uk). They are also on Twitter @PADSAs\_Group2015 and Facebook, Plymouth Argyle Disabled Supporters Association (closed group).

Other useful websites [www.levelplayingfield.org.uk](http://www.levelplayingfield.org.uk) and [www.disabledgo.com](http://www.disabledgo.com).