



**LINCOLN CITY SUPPORTERS' SOCIETY LIMITED**  
**MEMBERSHIP POLICY**

**A. Introduction.**

- i. Amended rules of Lincoln City Supporters' Society Limited, which trades as Red Imps Community Trust ("the Trust"), will be proposed for adoption at the Trust's Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2024. All references in this document to "Rules" are to the rules as proposed for adoption at that AGM. Those rules, if adopted, will only take effect when they are registered by the Financial Conduct Authority under Section 16 of the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 ("the Act"). Following such registration, the amended rules will become available to view by the general public at <https://mutuals.fca.org.uk/> and at <https://www.redimpstrust.co.uk/policies/trust-constitution/>. All Trust Members will then be bound by those amended rules (Section 15 of the Act).
- ii. Trust Members must pay an annual subscription of such reasonable sum or sums as the Trust Board shall decide (Rule 13). The Trust can have different classes of Members (Section 45(3) of the Act). Guidance issued by the Football Supporters' Association is that the Trust Board has a discretion to set different levels of subscription for different classes of membership, including increased charges for additional "experiences" and reduced charges for praiseworthy service.

- iii. This Policy was approved by the Trust Board on 10<sup>th</sup> April 2024 in anticipation of the Rules being adopted at the AGM, at which it will also be proposed that this Policy should be ratified. It confirms the classes of membership and the subscription levels applicable for the year from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2024.
- iv. This Policy will be reviewed by the Trust Board by no later than 30<sup>th</sup> April each year, when the classes of membership and the subscription levels will be set for the year from the following 1<sup>st</sup> August. A resolution to ratify the latest reviewed Policy will be proposed at all the Trust's Annual General Meetings.

## **B. General Principles**

- i. The Trust avoids and opposes all forms of unlawful discrimination, including in respect of membership: its Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy can be viewed at <https://www.redimpstrust.co.uk/policies/trust-policies/>.
- ii. Membership of the Trust is open (Rule 11) to any individual, unincorporated body, firm, partnership or corporate body who or which:-
  - a. is a supporter of Lincoln City Football Club (the Club); or
  - b. has an interest in football in the Lincoln area and is in sympathy with the objects of the Trust.
- iii. £1 will be applied from the first subscription payment received from each new Trust Member to buy a £1 share for that Member in the Trust (Rule 13), but every Trust Member can have no more than one £1 share in their name (Rules 12, 18.2, 19 & 21), regardless of how much they pay in any one year or cumulatively over a number of years.
- iv. The £1 share in the Trust of any Trust Member whose membership lapses or ends in any other way is cancelled without any repayment being made (Rule 20) but, in the event of them subsequently re-joining the Trust, that person will be treated as a new Trust Member and issued with another new £1 share (Rule 13).
- v. The Trust Board has certain powers to refuse applications for membership (Rule 11) and Trust Members may be removed (Rule 23) or expelled (Rule 24) in certain circumstances. The Trust's Disciplinary Policy (which can be viewed at <https://www.redimpstrust.co.uk/policies/trust-policies/>) will apply where appropriate, as will the Trust's Dispute Resolution Procedure (Rules 123 & 124).
- vi. All Trust Members who are at least 18 years of age have one vote on any question to be decided in a General Meeting of the Trust (Rules 15.2, 15.3 & 47).
- vii. All Trust Members who are at least 18 years of age are entitled to seek election as Trust Board Members and to be appointed as Trust Officers (Rules 15.1 & 16).
- viii. All the Trust's communications for its legitimate purposes (including formal notices of meetings) will be sent in electronic format if an email address has been provided and in hard copy format if a postal address has been provided. Members are responsible for ensuring that the email or postal address that they provide is operational. All changes to a member's email or postal address must be communicated to the Trust either by electronic means or in hard copy written

format. Members are responsible for ensuring that they read the Trust's communications sent to the email or postal address provided.

**C. Ordinary Members – Electronic List**

- i. This category of membership is open to everyone who is at least 18 years of age at the date of joining or re-joining who provides the Trust with an email address.
- ii. The annual fee payable by such members is £5, which covers the period from the date of joining or re-joining to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2025. For members of the Club's Gold, Silver and Bronze Membership Schemes, those fees will be paid to the Trust by the Club on behalf of the member as an automatic benefit included in those Schemes, as confirmed in a Memorandum of Understanding between the Trust and the Club. A further £5 fee, to continue membership of the Trust throughout the year from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2025, may also be paid at any time before that date.

**D. Ordinary Members – Postal List**

- i. This category of membership is open to everyone who is at least 18 years of age at the date of joining or re-joining who does not provide the Trust with an email address. Such members must provide the Trust with a postal address.
- ii. The annual fee payable by such members is £15, which covers the period from the date of joining or re-joining to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2025. A further £15 fee, to continue membership of the Trust throughout the year from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2025, may also be paid at any time before that date.

**E. Junior Members**

- i. This category of membership is open to everyone who is under 18 years of age at the date of joining or re-joining. Safeguarding guidance issued by The Football Association is that all emails from organisations such as the Trust to anyone under 18 years of age must be copied to an adult with parental responsibility. Such members must therefore provide the Trust with the email address of an adult with parental responsibility for the member, in addition to their own email address. Members are only entitled to vote on any Trust matters once they have attained 18 years of age (Rule 15).
- ii. The annual fee payable by such members is £1, which covers the period from the date of joining or rejoining to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2025. For members of the Club's Gold, Silver and Bronze Membership Schemes, those fees will be paid to the Trust by the Club on behalf of the member as an automatic benefit included in those Schemes, as confirmed in a Memorandum of Understanding between the Trust and the Club. A further £1 fee, to continue membership of the Trust throughout the year from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2025, may also be paid at any time before that date.

## **F. John O’Gaunts Club Members**

- i. This category of membership was launched by the Club in partnership with the Trust on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2024 and is open to everyone. Such members must provide the Trust with either an email address or a postal address.
- ii. Such members are entitled to:-
  - a. part of the LNER Stadium turf if they join by 30/04/24;
  - b. two exclusive online forums with the Club’s Head Coach, Chief Executive Officer and Board Members;
  - c. tours of the LNER Stadium and of the Soper of Lincoln Elite Player Performance Centre;
  - d. a shirt (either home or away or third) from the 2024/25 season;
  - e. a branded padded seat cushion;
  - f. an Imps branded scarf;
  - g. a welcome gift from the Club;
  - h. an exclusive discount on merchandise in the Club’s store for the 2024/25 campaign;
  - i. either one free match ticket for a friend or a one-time free upgrade to the Branston Legends Lounge for a game; and
  - j. be nominated for election for a term of two years as the Trust’s representative of the John O’Gaunts Club Members (including its Gold Legacy Members) on the Club Board, provided that they will only take on that role if they are elected and:-
    - comply with all requirements of the Owners’ and Directors’ Tests applicable to the competitions in which the Club’s first team competes; and
    - are approved by the Club’s Board of Directors.
- iii. The annual fee (which covers the period from the date of joining to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2025) payable by such members to the Club (either as a standalone product or as an upgrade from the Club’s Gold Membership Scheme) is £320. The fee payable and benefits receivable by such members during the year from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2025 will be agreed between the Club and the Trust before that date and a further fee, to continue membership throughout that year, may also be paid at any time before that date.
- iv. On behalf of each such member, the Club will pay from that annual fee the sum of £200 to the Trust for use to generate the purchase of 400 shares in the Club, with a nominal value of £200, which will be transferred directly from the Club to the Trust. Any such membership purchased as a standalone product (rather than as an upgrade from the Club’s Gold Membership Scheme) is also conditional upon a further £1 membership fee being paid by the member to the Trust.

## **G. John O’Gaunts Club Gold Legacy Members**

- i. New admissions to this category of membership (which was previously known as the Trust’s Gold Membership Scheme) have not been accepted since 15<sup>th</sup> February

2024, prior to which it was open to everyone. Members who joined it before that date must provide the Trust with either an email address or a postal address. Such memberships continue for a term of five years from the date of joining or re-joining, after which the member is able to continue membership for a further five years at an increased fee, calculated having regard to consumer price inflation in the intervening period.

- ii. Such members are entitled to:-
  - a. access with a guest to the Club's boardroom on one matchday per season, the date (subject to availability) being agreed between the Trust and the member;
  - b. on three matchdays chosen by the Trust each season:-
    - i. attend a pre-match meeting with Club Board representatives, the Club's First Team Manager or Head Coach and others, such as members of the Club's Former Players' Association (FPA) or the Club's backroom staff;
    - ii. service of a buffet meal during those meetings;
    - iii. the opportunity to stay in the room in order to socialise after the meeting until the kick off time;
    - iv. if the member concerned does not belong to the Club's Gold Membership Scheme, to request one free match ticket, giving access to the Legends Lounge area of the Club's stadium, with such requests being approved for the first 15 applicants per matchday;
  - c. the same priority as members of the Club's Gold Membership Scheme when purchasing tickets for the Club's home cup games and for any of its away games;
  - d. be nominated for election for a term of two years as the Trust's representative of the John O'Gaunts Club Members (including its Gold Legacy Members) on the Club Board, provided that they will only take on that role if they are elected and:-
    - i. comply with all requirements of the Owners' and Directors' Tests applicable to the competitions in which the Club's first team competes; and
    - ii. are approved by the Club's Board of Directors.
  - e. be treated as Trust Members for the rest of their lifetime if they complete at least one full five-year term's membership of the John O'Gaunts Club Gold Legacy scheme, but subsequently do not renew such membership, provided that they certify to the Trust's Membership Secretary at annual intervals that, for data protection purposes, they consent to remaining on the Trust's mailing list.
- iii. The fee payable by such members is frozen for the five-year term at the levels shown below, payable either immediately as a single lump sum or, if the member so wishes, in sixty equal monthly instalments during the term.

	<u>Date of receipt of latest membership application or renewal</u>	<u>Lump Sum</u>	<u>Monthly Payments</u>
	Up to and including 31 <sup>st</sup> July 2024	£1,680.00	£28.00
	From 1 <sup>st</sup> August 2024 to 31 <sup>st</sup> July 2025	£2,100.00	£35.00
iv.	Each season, each such member will generate from the fees mentioned immediately above the shares specified below, which will be transferred directly from the Club to the Trust		

	<u>Date of receipt of latest membership application or renewal</u>	<u>Number of shares</u>	<u>Nominal Value of shares</u>
	Up to and including 31 <sup>st</sup> July 2024	300	£150
	From 1 <sup>st</sup> August 2024 to 31 <sup>st</sup> July 2025	370	£185

#### **H. Small Business Members**

- i. This category of membership is open to corporate bodies, unincorporated bodies, partnerships and firms. Such members must provide the Trust with an email address and may also provide an email address or a postal address for a delegate who is at least 18 years of age. Any such delegate will be entitled to attend the Trust's meetings on behalf of the member. Any such delegate will also be entitled on behalf of the member to speak, to vote on any Trust matters and to seek election at such meetings. Nobody can act as delegate for more than one such member (Rule 14).
- ii. Such members are entitled to:-
  - a. be mentioned in the regular news updates circulated by the Trust to all its members for whom an email address is held;
  - b. be mentioned regularly on the Trust's social media channels;
  - c. the display of their logo on the websites of the Trust and of its Museum and in the Trust's YouTube videos;
  - d. be represented at the Trust's pod in the University of Lincoln Fan Village on the Club's home matchdays;
  - e. a printed certificate on joining.
- iii. The annual fee payable by such members is £25, which covers the period from the date of joining or re-joining to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2025. A further £25 fee, to continue membership of the Trust throughout the year from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2025, may also be paid at any time before that date.

#### **I. FPA Members**

- i. This category of membership is open to everyone who has had a professional playing contract with the Club who also belongs to the FPA. Such members must provide the FPA's Secretary with either an email address or a postal address. In accordance with any Data Sharing Agreement that may be signed on behalf of the Trust and on behalf of the FPA, that Secretary will act as the Trust's agent and share

with it any information that might be necessary in order to enable such members to vote on any Trust matters.

- ii. The one-off joining fee (which will be paid by the FPA to the Trust on behalf of its members) for each such member is £1, which covers the entire period throughout which they retain their membership of the FPA.

#### **J. Honorary Members**

- i. This category of membership is open to anyone who the Trust Board deems to have provided exemplary service to either the Trust or the Club or the local community. Such members must provide the Trust with either an email address or a postal address.
- ii. If such members are already Trust members at the date of being awarded Honorary Membership status, no further fee is payable. If such members are not already Trust members at that date, then a one-off fee (which may be paid by the person nominating or seconding to the Trust Board the award to them of Honorary Membership status) of £1 is payable. In either case, such memberships will lapse on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2025, but may be renewed before 1<sup>st</sup> August each year for another year without any further fee being payable, if the member certifies to the Trust's Membership Secretary that, for data protection purposes, s/he consents to remaining on the Trust's mailing list.

#### **K. Life Members**

- i. This category of membership is open to anyone who the Trust Board deems to have provided service of the highest standard imaginable to either the Trust or the Club or the local community. Such members must provide the Trust with either an email address or a postal address.
- ii. If such members are already Trust members at the date of being awarded Life Membership status, no further fee is payable. If such members are not already Trust members at that date, then a one-off fee (which may be paid by the person nominating or seconding to the Trust Board the award to them of Life Membership status) of £1 is payable. In either case, such memberships will continue for the rest of the member's life.