



22 June 2004

Damon Le Geyt  
Chairman  
Wimbledon FC Supporters Club (MK)  
PO Box 7294  
Milton Keynes  
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Dear Damon

I write formally in reply to your letter of 8 June 2004. I have waited until now to reply as, during the last two weeks, I have been discussing with the football authorities how we may effect a name change and the best way of achieving this.

As has been publicly documented, it was my intention to hold a ballot of supporters and those registered on the ticket database with regard to the Club's change of name and indeed all the preparation work for this had been completed. I am therefore, very disappointed that I have been unable to implement the ballot as it would have enabled us to focus the attention of the whole of Milton Keynes on the future of the football club and, at the same time, potentially expand our database with new registrations. I can confirm that we had discussed this approach with the Football League and with Milton Keynes Council, who would have overseen the vote to ensure its integrity.

As you know, the vote was planned to be our first move once ownership had transferred to us but, at the time of writing we have still not completed the acquisition of the Club. It is still expected any day - as it has been since the challenge of the Inland Revenue was defeated nearly a month ago. However, as demonstrated many times last season the pace of football is relentless and fixed events, such as this weeks fixture list release, have forced us to address the issue. It was imperative that we went into the new season with a name that reflected the club's new conurbation of Milton Keynes, whilst maintaining a direct link with the club's proud heritage.

Despite not holding the ballot, I have in recent weeks been taking soundings from all stakeholder groups with regard to the Club's identity and how we can best place football at the heart of our community. I have noted, for example, that that the phone vote of approximately 500 of your members was 55/45 in favour of maintaining Wimbledon in the name and that your supporters club website is called 'mkdonsclub'. Other stakeholders, including public bodies, businesses and some in grass roots youth football, have expressed to me their overwhelming opinion that naming the Club Milton Keynes was the right thing to do, however difficult in the short term, to secure the long-term support of our young community. Given all the circumstances I sincerely believe that Milton Keynes Dons FC best represents the reality that the relocation has brought, even though this is not the outcome that I would have imagined until a few months ago.

For better or for worse, it is now important to draw a line. There are so many things that may have been done differently but I can't undo the past. As I am sure most of you know, whilst I began this journey merely trying to help deliver the dream of professional football in Milton Keynes, I am now completely committed to ensuring that the Milton Keynes Dons will represent a future for the brave club that, like 200,000 other people in Milton Keynes, moved home for a new life.

With regard to the future relationship between the Club and the supporter's organisations, I am not sure it is possible to be both 'independent' and 'official'. I do not apologise for believing that the role of an official supporters club in the future will be to work tirelessly in promoting the club, getting behind the team and helping to provide a solid foundation for a successful future for professional football in Milton Keynes. There is an enormous job to do. I would hope that an official supporters club would also investigate the opportunities to become a supporter's trust and in this way ensure that a direct relationship can be formally recognised between the supporters and the football club.

I believe that we all owe it to the Club to work together, and look to emulate the amazing exploits of the past – Promotion Winners, FA Cup Winners, founder members of the Premier League. There is now an enormous burden of expectation on the future of the Club. I hope that you, your committee and your members will work with me and help make us all proud of what Milton Keynes Dons F.C. will go on to achieve.

With kind regards.

Yours sincerely,



PETE WINKELMAN