

Ground Criteria for Entry into the Kent County League and Retention in all Divisions other than the Premier Division

1. GROUND

1.1 Security of Tenure

Where a club does not own the freehold of their ground then evidence of adequate security of tenure must be provided.

1.2 Ground Share

Ground sharing is allowed, subject to the Management Committee agreement and taking into account local circumstances.

Ground sharing must not be allowed for a club to gain promotion.

1.3 Boundary of Ground

There is no requirement for the ground to be enclosed in any way.

1.4 Clubhouse

A clubhouse facility, whilst being desirable, is not compulsory.

1.5 Car Parking

There should be adequate car parking facilities on or reasonably adjacent to the ground.

1.6 Pitch Perimeter Barrier

When Assistant Referees are appointed by this Competition a pitch perimeter barrier must be provided on match days.

As a minimum, there must be post and rope surrounding the pitch on the touchlines that may be occupied by spectators.

When in use, ideally there should be a minimum of 1.83 metres ideally 2.00 metres between the touchline, goal line and the pitch perimeter barrier

1.7 Pitch Standards

The playing surface will be grass, unless otherwise authorized by the respective League Rules and must be of an acceptable standard, free from surface depressions and undulations.

The maximum slope allowable shall not exceed an even gradient of vertical to horizontal 1 : 41 in any direction.

1.8 Playing Area

The playing area is to be in accordance with the requirements of the Laws of the Game. Law 1 states that the length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line.

Length	-	Minimum 90 m (100 yds)	Maximum 120 m (130 yds)
Width	-	Minimum 45 m (50 yds)	Maximum 90 m (100 yds)

It should be noted that at Grade H the playing area must be a **minimum of 100 metres x 64 metres**.

Goal posts and goal net supports should be of professional manufacture and conform to the current safety requirements and to the requirements of the Laws of the Game.

Reference should be made to the Goalpost Safety Information booklet published by The Football Association.

1.9 Technical Area

Trainer's boxes are not compulsory, if portable trainers' boxes are used they must be securely fixed.

If trainer's boxes are used then it is desirable for a Technical Area to be marked out in accordance with the guidance contained in the 'Laws of the Game' booklet.

1.10 Secure Walkway

A secure walkway is not a requirement.

1.11 Entrances and Exits

There is no requirement for fixed entry points. All exit points must be clearly signposted.

1.12 Emergency Access

Access for emergency services should be provided.

2. SPECTATOR FACILITIES

2.1 Toilets

Provision should be made for adequate toilet facilities.

2.2 Refreshments

Refreshment facilities for spectators are not compulsory.

3. DRESSING ROOM FACILITIES

All dressing rooms must be secure and suitable for the purpose

3.1 DRESSING ROOM FACILITIES - Players

Separate dressing rooms must be provided for both teams. Whilst shared facilities are acceptable, ideally the facilities should be en-suite. A minimum of three working shower heads with hot and cold running water and one WC is required. If not en-suite then the shower and toilet facilities must be located adjacent to but not necessarily in the changing area and must not be accessible to the public.

Existing dressing room dimensions will be in order, provided that they are of a minimum of 12 square metres, excluding the shower and toilet areas.

Where clubs are planning to build new changing rooms, these must be planned to be a minimum size of 18 square metres, excluding shower and toilet areas.

Clubs wishing to gain promotion to the Premier Division should take note that each dressing room area should have the following:

- A shower area comprising of at least 3 working showerheads for each team
- Adequate toilet facilities exclusively for the use of players
- Hot and cold running water

The shower and toilet facilities must be located adjacent to but not necessarily in the changing area and must not be accessible to the general public.

Shared shower facilities are not acceptable. Ideally separate toilet facilities should be provided for each team. It is not acceptable for players and match officials to share toilet facilities.

In order to be considered for promotion to Step 6, clubs must have en suite shower and toilet facilities with a minimum of 4 shower heads.

3.2 Match Officials

A separate dressing room must be provided for the match official(s), the minimum size of which shall be 4 square metres, excluding the shower and toilet areas.

Clubs that wish to gain promotion to the Premier Division should take note that:

The match official's dressing room should have the following:

- At least 1 working showerhead (with hot and cold running water)

Adequate toilet facilities which do not necessarily need to be situated in the dressing room

Provision should be made for changing accommodation for both male and female match officials.

When new changing rooms are being planned or existing changing rooms refurbished an area of 6 square metres and facilities for mixed gender match officials should be considered.

All dressing room areas to be maintained to a high level of cleanliness and secure on match days

4. MEDICAL

There must be a suitable qualified person (minimum F.A. Save a Life) in attendance.

All clubs must provide first aid equipment at their ground.

5 GROUND AVAILABILITY and FIXTURES

Clubs must be prepared to commence playing at their home ground on the commencement date of the season as determined at the Annual General Meeting and have ground availability of at least 20 Saturdays during the season.

Should a club's designated ground not be available at any time then it is the responsibility of that Club to find an alternative ground approved by the Management Committee and bear the costs relating to such an arrangement.

Bank Holiday fixtures, avoiding long distance travelling, may be arranged and played following mutual consent by both competing teams.

6 ADMINISTRATION, FACILITIES and SOCIAL

6.1 Management Structure

Clubs will be required to furnish details of their management structure and financial position. A club should have at least five committee members which must include a Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer.

6.2 Dressing rooms opening

Dressing rooms to be made available to visiting teams and match official(s) one hour before kick-off.

6.3 Refreshments

Refreshments must be made available to players and match official(s), home and visiting club officials at half time and full time. The minimum requirement is at full time.

A refreshment room or Social Club must be available to players, match official(s), home and visiting club officials after the game either at the ground or within a reasonable distance from the ground where food and drinks are available.

6.4 Telephone

There must be at least one land line telephone or mobile telephone available at the ground on match days.

7 INSPECTIONS

7.1 Clubs seeking promotion from Division One and wishing to be considered for membership of the Premier Division must submit their application for their ground and facilities to be inspected by 31st March in the current season. The application must be in writing to the General Secretary and accompanied by an inspection fee of £30.00 which is non- returnable in any event. Should subsequent inspections be required a fee of £30.00 will be charged for each visit.

The League will inspect the ground as soon as possible and a report will be submitted to the Club detailing the work required to meet the criteria.

7.2 Clubs should note that if they intend changing their grounds then they must inform the General Secretary in writing by 31st December in any year. Failure to do so may exclude Clubs participating in the Premier Division the following season.

In so far as the relation to the locality/area whose name the club bears the location of any ground in this category must meet with the approval of the Management Committee.

Clubs will not be considered for promotion if any proposed ground sharing agreement is, in the opinion of the Management Committee, arranged especially to gain promotion to the Premier Division.

7.3 Clubs must ensure their grounds and facilities meet these criteria at all times. Failure to comply may result in defaulting club(s) being relegated from the Division in which they are playing.

8 NOTES

Teams should be encouraged to return to the changing rooms at half time.

Clubs should nominate someone to meet visiting team and officials on arrival at their ground.

Always act in a friendly manner to all your visitors throughout their stay.

If available, extend after match hospitality to wives, partners and children.

Telephone in results and goal scorers promptly in order that maximum media coverage can be obtained

Produce a match programme whenever possible.

Any club making alterations to or re-building its ground or facilities is advised to refer to the Step 7 guidelines in the League handbook or to the F A National League System website for the ground criteria relating to "STEP 7 – MINIMUM GRADING GUIDELINES" or if major ground improvements are planned then reference should be made to the F A Category "F" Grading criteria.