

Disabled parking charge for matches

Wanderers want blue badge holders to pay

By Will Burton

DISABLED supporters of Wycombe Wanderers will be forced to pay for their parking spaces after the club confirmed they will charge blue badge holders up to £120 to park their cars next season.

The club say from the 2016-17 season onwards, all vehicles will be charged £5 to park on match days with a season-long pass being available for £120.

Wanderers say the move was put in place "to ensure fair treatment for all supporters" but lifelong Chairboys fans have questioned the decision.

One fan, who did not want to be named, said: "I have supported the club since I was a kid. When I found out about the decision I was not at all happy.

"What made it worse was Gareth Ainsworth saying how they want to keep and even increase the number of supporters.

"That is what really made my blood boil."

The move comes a week after manager Gareth Ainsworth emphasised the importance of the club increasing its fanbase in order to compete with the in-



Manager Gareth Ainsworth stressed the importance of growing the fanbase

creasing amounts of top level and European football being broadcast.

The Chairboys' manager said: "It is amazingly important to attract and keep fans. We are trying to do things behind the scenes to develop the club and we are all for anything which will get more fans through the door."

The club even brought in a 'try before you buy' scheme for last week's home match against Mansfield where adults were able to buy tickets for just £10 with the aim of attracting more season ticket holders.

Blue badge holders in the UK receive extra parking rights but are not automatically entitled to free parking.

Currently they receive free parking at Adams Park, subject to registering

their details with the club to pre-book a space.

In a statement, the club said: "We provide a number of designated spaces for disabled supporters which is considerably higher than the allocation recommended by the footballing authorities and Department for Transport.

"During the current season, where blue badge holders have been able to park for free, the number of spaces occupied has at times been unusually high.

"This has left many disabled supporters unable to obtain a space."

■ Are you a Wanderers fan and blue badge holder? What is your view on the move? Email william.burton@london.newsquest.co.uk.

Statement issued on cost of spaces

WYCOMBE Wanderers have issued a statement over the parking charges. The club told the BFP: The club provides a number of designated spaces for disabled supporters which is considerably higher than the allocation recommended by the footballing authorities and Department for Transport.

During the current season, where blue badge holders have been able to park for free, the number of spaces occupied by blue badge holders has at times been unusually high and left many disabled supporters and pass holders unable to obtain a space.

The club now asks for blue badge holders to register their details with the club in order to pre-book guaranteed

spaces within the car park, and from the 2016/17 season onwards, all vehicles will be charged £5 to park to ensure fair treatment for all supporters, retaining designated parking spaces for fans with disabilities. A season-long pass is available for £120.

The club is fully compliant with the guidelines set out by the Level Playing Field organisation in relation to access and facilities for disabled supporters, including audio commentary for visually impaired supporters, provision of wheelchairs where required and a designated disabled liaison officer. In addition, carers of disabled supporters are entitled to free admission to all home fixtures.