



ITFC Away Guide 2021/22

An Introduction to the 23 League One Grounds

Prepared by the ITFC Supporter Liaison Officer, with
added input from other ITFC staff

About this guide

- This introductory guide is produced by people who have visited all of the grounds in recent years.
- The idea is to help you to plan your away trips – in some cases, to choose which are the grounds / places you most want to go to.
- Detailed away guides are produced a few weeks before each match, published on the ITFC website, and available for review at the SLO Hub in the FanZone at ITFC.
 - Note that up-to-date information on rail engineering works (+ replacement buses) and road closures will be included in the detailed match guides.
- In compiling this guide, we have mostly relied on our own knowledge and memories, but we have used several additional resources, including opposition Clubs' websites, www.greateranglia.co.uk and www.google.co.uk/maps.
- In particular, though, we have used the website www.footballgroundguide.com, for stadium information, capacities, away ends, fanzones and parking. We do recommend you take a look at this website as you plan your games – but check out our detailed pre-match guides, issued a couple of weeks before each game, for updated pub information – the last year has seen a lot of pub changes, including some new openings.

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- To purchase tickets and coach travel:
 - <https://tickets.itfc.co.uk/> (note there is £1.50 booking charge per transaction)
 - In person at Planet Blue (non-matchday and up to 5:00pm on a midweek matchday). Note there are no matchday sales at the Constantine Road Ticket Office whilst we are under Covid restrictions.

Away ticket sale priorities

Away games are sold on a priority basis, as follows:

- Ultimate members, then Gold members, then Season Ticket holders, then Silver members, then general sale.
- Note that some games have restrictions on general sale, based on having a prior purchase history.
- Note also that an extra level of priority may be applied for those matches with a limited allocation; this priority would be based on the number of previous away games attended during the course of the season.
 - Whilst we cannot predict exactly the level of away support, there are several grounds where we expect to sell out very quickly – we indicate these on the relevant club page below.

2021/22 season - Where will we be playing

- Accrington Stanley
- AFC Wimbledon
- Bolton Wanderers
- Burton Albion
- Cambridge United
- Charlton Athletic
- Cheltenham Town
- Crewe Alexandra
- Doncaster Rovers
- Fleetwood Town
- Gillingham
- Lincoln City
- MK Dons
- Morecambe
- Oxford United
- Plymouth Argyle
- Portsmouth
- Rotherham United
- Sheffield Wednesday
- Shrewsbury
- Sunderland
- Wigan Athletic
- Wycombe Wanderers

Detailed away guides will be available at www.itfc.co.uk and in the FanZone from approximately two weeks before each game

Accrington Stanley

Where is it?

In the North-West, north of Manchester, about halfway between Blackburn and Burnley.

Address:

The Wham Stadium
Livingstone Road, Accrington, BB5 5BX

Website: www.accringtonstanley.co.uk

By road:

Around 5 hours, usual route is A14 / A1 / M62 / M66 / A56 / A680. Another option is A14 / M6 / M65 / A678 / A680. Official coaches are likely to leave 8 hours before kick off and arrive back 6 hours after the end of the game. Street parking or limited paid stadium parking.

By rail:

Via London Liverpool St / Euston / Preston or Manchester, or cross-country via Peterborough / York or Leeds. Trains from Manchester go from Victoria station. Ground is a 20 min walk from the station.

How to fill in time on matchday:

There are several pubs which have been enjoyed by Town fans in the past, including The Crown on Whalley St (near the stadium). Accrington is generally away-friendly, so you should be ok in most pubs. There is also a fanzone at the ground.

The Oaklea fish & chip shop is on Whalley Road, opposite the Grey Horse pub, and is very good!

What's the ground like?

It's a wonderful, proper lower-league ground, capacity just 5,450, but there is plenty of room for away fans, most of whom will be standing on a shallow, open terrace behind the goal.

Away seating is on the side, and covered. Away catering is behind the seated stand.

Away allocation:

1,800 standing (Coppice Terrace) plus up to 500 seats (Eric Whalley Stand).

If you're spending a bit more time there:

Most Town fans spending more time in the area are likely to gravitate to one of the major cities en route, typically Manchester or Leeds, both of which have everything for a fabulous night out, great shopping and an array of museums, galleries, theatres and restaurants.

Hebden Bridge (on the Leeds line) is highly rated, as a pretty town with great pubs.

AFC Wimbledon

Where is it?

For the first time since phoenix club AFC Wimbledon was formed, we can declare that the stadium is in Wimbledon. It is a new ground, just a short distance from their historic Plough Lane home.

Address:

Plough Lane, London, SW17 0NR

Website: www.afcwimbledon.co.uk

By road:

Around 3 hours, as it's nestled into the London conurbation. From Ipswich, you'd likely go A12 / M25 / A3. This route is usually quicker than the M25 / A20 / South Circular route that SatNavs sometimes prefer. For most fans, train will be easier. Parking is not easy, but there are public car parks in the centre of Wimbledon, about 15 minutes' walk from the ground.

By rail:

The quickest route from Liverpool St station is to via Moorgate / Tooting Broadway ((Northern Line), then a 20-minute walk or short bus ride. By National rail, you go Waterloo to Wimbledon (zone 3). Trains run frequently and take around 10-15 minutes. Ground is about a 30 min walk from the station. Alternatively, take the District Line to Wimbledon Park + 25-30 minute walk away. Using the Northern Line route, you should get back to Liverpool St within an hour of the end of the game.

How to fill in time on matchday:

Most Town fans will either find pubs in and around the centre of Wimbledon, or will try some of the many pubs around Waterloo station. As the ground has not yet welcomed away fans, we cannot confirm whether there are bar or fanzone facilities at the stadium, other than the concourse. It is also unclear which pubs around the ground might welcome away fans, though Tooting Broadway is a reasonable option.

What's the ground like?

It is a new ground, but has more atmosphere than you might expect, as there are apartment blocks behind two of the stands, which give it a sense of being enclosed and somehow make it feel bigger than its capacity suggests. Last season, some enterprising Town fans managed to watch the game from the roof of one of the apartment blocks!

Away allocation:

1,800, in the Cherry Red Records Stand which is the North Stand behind the goal. Although this is a big allocation, we expect this game to be very popular with Town fans – both because it is a new ground, and also being very easy to get to.

If you're spending a bit more time there:

There is all of London to explore of course, but you might want to consider spending a bit of time in Wimbledon, which has good retail, restaurants and pubs, as well as the Lawn Tennis Museum. There are a number of hotels in and around Wimbledon too, which makes this one of the best matchdays for an extended stay. One option is to stay in Kingston Upon Thames, just 10 minutes away by train, with great shopping, pubs and river views and walks.

Bolton Wanderers

Where is it?

In the North-West, in Horwich, just off Junction 6 of the M61.

Address:

University of Bolton Stadium, Burnden Way, Horwich, Bolton, BL6 6JW

Website: www.bwfc.co.uk

By road:

Around 4 hours 30 minutes, usual route is A14 / A1 / M62 / M61. Another option is A14 / M6 / M62 / M60 / M61 but is likely to take longer. Official coaches are likely to leave at least 7 and a half hours before kick off and arrive back no earlier than 5 and a half hours after the end of the game. Parking is available at the ground and also in the industrial estates around the stadium (Lostock Lane).

By rail:

Via London Liverpool St / Euston / Manchester Piccadilly. From Manchester Piccadilly you take a train to Horwich Parkway which is 200 metres from the stadium. Post-match there's a queuing system, which may segregate home and away fans, so you may not be able to get on the first train out.

How to fill in time on matchday:

The Middlebrook Retail Park next to the stadium has numerous food outlets, shops and other activities. You can't park there for the match, and some outlets (selling alcohol) don't allow away fans.

The Beehive pub on Chorley New Road is the main away pub. The Barnstormers pub on Lostock Lane also allows away fans.

What's the ground like?

It's modern and iconic – and holds fond memories for Town fans who remember our successful play-off campaign in 2000.

Catering facilities are as you would expect (though, in our experience, they manage to cook a Hollands pie far better than most), and alcohol is normally available to away fans.

Away allocation:

Huge – up to 5,000. If we sell this one out, then we will be having an amazing season!

If you're spending a bit more time there:

Quite a few Town fans will overnight before or after the game (or both). There are a couple of Premier Inns very near the ground which are popular, and good nearby pubs for non-matchday socialising. There is also Whites hotel, which is built into the stadium, with some rooms offering a great view of the pitch (NB matchday restrictions on occupancy and alcohol!). Other Town fans will take advantage of being so close to Manchester, so will overnight there instead.

Burton Albion

Where is it?

Nestled in the Midlands, not far from lots of places, including Derby and Tamworth, but with a wonderful, distinct identity.

Address: Pirelli Stadium, Princess Way, Burton-on-Trent, DE13 0AR

Website: www.burtonalbionfc.co.uk

By road:

A14 / M1 / A511 / A5121, taking about 3 hours. There is a car park at the ground, but most fans use the unofficial car parks in nearby industrial estates. Official coaches will leave Ipswich around 6 hours before kick off, and arrive back around 4 hours after the game.

By rail:

It isn't the easiest by rail from Ipswich. Plan on at least a 4 hour journey, with changes at Liverpool St / Euston / Tamworth or cross-country with changes at Ely and Nottingham.

How to fill in time on matchday:

It's Burton – some call it the brewing capital of the world, and certainly it once had a real claim to that title. Many supporters will crowd in and around the Weighbridge Inn, next to the station, which is run by Town fans Richard & Mandy Muir, and features their great Muirhouse Brewery beers. The town centre is full of memories of the town's great brewing heritage, including the National Brewery Centre and museum (which also has a pretty good bar and shop). Otherwise, you have a choice of a huge number of varied and interesting pubs, most of which are entirely away-friendly. A day is nowhere near enough to explore all the decent pubs in town.

What's the ground like?

Small. The capacity is just under 7,000, with only just over 2000 seats. It's modern and compact, and only about a mile from the town centre.

Away allocation:

1,400 standing on the East Terrace, giving a real chance to create a good atmosphere, plus 400 seats in the corner of the Main Stand. All the stands are fairly shallow, as you'd expect. It's the first game of the season, so could well sell out.

If you're spending a bit more time there:

As the "matchday" section across the page suggests, there are enough fascinating pubs to keep you interested for a few days. The tour around the Brewery Centre is worthwhile, (the Marstons tour is also worth exploring). There are a number of hotels in town, including a budget Ibis (used to be a Travelodge) almost next door to the station and Weighbridge Inn, and a Premier Inn about a mile away. We would usually put a word in for the Hilton at St Georges Park, based in the FA's fabulous training centre, but it appears to be fully booked (or closed to the public) the night before the game.

Cambridge United

Where is it?

60 miles west of Ipswich, our closest away game and a great city to spend some time on matchday. The ground is at least half an hour's walk from town, but there are very frequent buses.

Address: Abbey Stadium, Newmarket Rd, Cambridge CB5 8LN

Website: www.cambridge-united.co.uk

By road:

Just head west on the A14 for about an hour, taking the first Cambridge junction towards the airport. Continue for another mile or so and the ground is on the left. There is street parking in the estates opposite the ground, and also off Coldhams Lane, across the common from the away end. Official coaches will leave Ipswich around 3 hours before kick off, and arrive back around 2 hours after the game.

By rail:

There are hourly trains from Ipswich, and nowadays they should all have three carriages. But on matchday, they will still be very, very busy of course. It is a 40 minute walk to the ground, though there are frequent buses from the station. If you do walk, allow plenty of extra time as you may well be delayed in one or more of the excellent pubs en route.

How to fill in time on matchday:

It would almost be a crime just to go straight to the ground and back, as Cambridge is a great city to visit. There's the cultural attraction of the university buildings, museums and galleries, some great shopping, a wide choice of fabulous pubs and restaurants, and the chance to try your skills at punting on the river. There are no away-friendly pubs near the ground, though.

What's the ground like?

The new part of the ground is the south stand, which is the away end. The rest of the ground is attractively traditional and piecemeal. The capacity is around 8,000.

Away allocation:

2,000, in the south stand, which is accessed off Coldhams Common (watch out for the cow pats!). Although that is a big away allocation, the game is going to be very popular with Town fans so is likely to sell out very quickly.

If you're spending a bit more time there:

As the "matchday" section across the page suggests, there is plenty to do in Cambridge to keep you occupied for a few days, should you so choose. The city centre is compact, but packed with shops, pubs and bars, as well as historic college buildings. Culture vultures will head for the Fitzwilliam Museum, cake addicts will want to visit Fitzbillies nearby. For families, the Scott Polar Research museum on Lensfield Road is well worth a visit. There is a Premier Inn and a Travelodge within a mile of the ground, on or just off Newmarket Road, plus a newish Ibis at the railway station. There are also some far more expensive options nearer the centre, including a newish Hilton right next to the Corn Exchange.

Charlton Athletic

Where is it?

South-east London, a short train ride from London Bridge, and just a few minutes beyond the Blackwall Tunnel at the south end of the A12.

Address: The Valley, Valley Floyd Road, Charlton, SE

Website: www.cafc.co.uk

By road:

Take the A12 south. It is probably quicker then to take the M25 / M11 / A406 to rejoin the A12 at the Redbridge roundabout. Continue through the Blackwall Tunnel and follow signs to the ground. Official coaches will leave Ipswich around 3-4 hours before kick off, and arrive back around 2 hours after the game. Parking isn't easy – do not be tempted to use the new retail park near the ground, as matchday parking is not permitted there.

By rail:

Change either at Stratford onto the Jubilee Line to London Bridge, or at Liverpool St (Central Line to Bank, and then Northern Line to London Bridge, or bus numbers 35, 47, 48 or 149 from the stop opposite the station on Bishopsgate). Trains to Charlton run frequently, and take around 15 minutes. Of course, you may have to queue a while after the game. Alternatively, take the Jubilee Line to North Greenwich, and then it's a short trip on a 161, 472 or 486 bus.

How to fill in time on matchday:

Sadly, the traditional away pub, the Antigallican, has now closed. The closest away pubs are now the Angerstein and the Anchor & Hope, each about a 15-min walk from the ground. Many fans will choose to drink in and around the London Bridge area – note that many pubs here do not allow football colours on matchdays. Non-pubgoers and families could opt for a riverboat from London Bridge or Tower Pier to the O2 Arena, and then take a 161, 472 or 486 bus to the ground. Greenwich, with the Naval Museum, observatory, Cutty Sark and great shops, pubs, restaurants is also nearby, as is Blackheath.

What's the ground like?

Impressive and atmospheric, one of the best grounds we will go to this season.

Away allocation:

Up to 3,000, in the Jimmy Seed Stand behind the goal. It is an older stand, with quite cramped facilities and not the best sightlines, but that doesn't stop it being a favourite for many fans. This will be one of the most popular games, so may well sell out..

If you're spending a bit more time there:

Being so close to central London, Charlton is the ideal away game if you want to stretch a match into a longer break. We're not going to list all the tourist attractions of London here of course – but we would note that, in addition to the London Bridge / Borough Market area, trains from Charlton also go to Cannon Street (near St Pauls and the Millennium Bridge) and Charing Cross (for Covent Garden, Trafalgar Square and Theatreland).

Cheltenham Town

Where is it?

Well on the way to the south-west, near Gloucester.

Address: Jonny Rocks Stadium, Whaddon Road, Cheltenham, GL52 5NA

Website: www.ctfc.co.uk

By road:

It takes around 3-and-a-half hours, whether you go A14 / M6 / M42 / M5 / A4019 or A12 / M25 / M40/ A40. There is limited street parking fairly near the ground, or you may be able to pre-book a space at the ground. Alternatively, the nearby Parklands Social Club also offers pay-for parking. Official coaches will leave Ipswich around 6-and-a-half hours before kick off, and arrive back around 5 hours after the game.

By rail:

Travel via London Liverpool Street, then take the Hammersmith & City line to Paddington. There are trains roughly every hour from Paddington, taking about 2 hours to get to Cheltenham. It is then a 40-minute walk to the ground, so most fans will take a cab or bus. Of course, you won't be able to get back to Ipswich – or even London – by train after the game with the match on a Tuesday evening.

How to fill in time on matchday:

There is a bar at the ground, the Robins Nest, which normally allows away fans. Otherwise, there are a number of pubs within a reasonable walk of the ground, including the Sudeley and the Conservatory on Prestbury Road (with a decent fish & chip shop in-between them). Real ale types will likely head for the Kemble Brewery Inn on Fairview Street, or the Angry Parrot micropub & beer garden, on St James Street.

What's the ground like?

Small and traditional, but atmospheric. The capacity is just over 7,000.

Away allocation:

1,100, in the Hazlewoods Stand, behind the goal. This will be a new ground for many Town fans, but demand for tickets will be reduced by it being an evening game.

If you're spending a bit more time there:

Apart from being a worthwhile destination in its own right, Cheltenham is really well located to explore the Cotswolds and also the city of Gloucester (which, as a football fan, you may well not have been to yet!). Even the Malvern hills are just a short drive away. Accommodation in tourist areas will be quick difficult to find, and a bit expensive, as the match is in mid-August. It may be easier to find accommodation in Cheltenham itself – though beware that the ground is on the edge of town so you may have a longish walk.

Crewe Alexandra

Where is it?

Just beyond the Midlands, pretty much at the start of the north-west.

Address: Gresty Road, Crewe, CW2 6EB

Website: www.crewealex.net

By road:

A14 / M6 / A.500 / B5071. Official coaches will leave Ipswich around 6 hours before kick off, and arrive back around 5 hours after the game. There is street parking.

By rail:

The easiest way is via London. From Liverpool Street, take the Hammersmith & City or Metropolitan Line to Euston Square (5 mins walk to Euston), or change at Moorgate onto the Northern Line to Euston. Trains to Crewe run frequently, 2-3 an hour, with the fastest taking around 90 minutes. The ground is just a few minutes' walk from the station.

How to fill in time on matchday:

Crewe is a favourite away day for many football fans – easy to get to, with the ground right next to the station, many friendly pubs nearby, and a really good fish & chip shop too.

What's the ground like?

Lopsided – there is one impressive, single-tiered stand (opposite the away end), and three smaller stands. We get a side view, and it feels very close to the action.

Away allocation:

Just under 1,700 in the wonderfully-named Whitby Morrison Ice Cream Van Stand (you find yourself wishing it might be named after a local band) – although it is an evening game, there will still be a very good Town following, though we are unlikely to sell out.

If you're spending a bit more time there:

Previous visits suggest that many Town fans will enjoy an overnight stay in Crewe. There are hotels very near the ground, including Ibis Styles, Travelodge, Holiday Inn Express and Premier Inn, as well as the more traditional Crewe Arms. It is the kind of town where you can relax into a few excellent beers in the kind of pub that you will wish you could find on every away trip.

Doncaster Rovers

Where is it?

Yorkshire, but the easy bit to get to, as it's just off the A1.

Address: Keepmoat Stadium, Stadium Way, Doncaster, DN4 5JW

Website: www.doncasterroversfc.co.uk

By road:

A14 / A1 / M18 / A6182. It takes around 3 hours by car. Official coaches will leave Ipswich around 6 hours before kick off, and arrive back around 4 hours after the game. There is stadium parking, and also various unofficial options around the ground.

By rail:

The easiest route is with a single change at Peterborough, taking around three-and-a-half hours. It's a bit slower to go via Liverpool St and Kings Cross, but it's worth checking the cost of both options. The stadium is two miles out of town, so most will opt for a taxi or a bus from the nearby main bus station. We've walked it back after a game several times and it didn't feel too far... Being an evening game, you cannot get back to Ipswich by train, but there is a late train (22:50) to London Kings Cross, arriving at 01:15.

How to fill in time on matchday:

There are plenty enough decent pubs in the town centre, most a short walk from the station, to keep most visiting fans happy. In July 2021, we loved the away-friendly Doncaster Brewery & Tap, with cask, keg & bottled beers and an impressive choice of ciders. Given that the ground is outside of town and on a retail park, pub options near the ground are limited, though they are reportedly away-friendly. You may be able to get into the stadium bar too. The retail park has plenty of options to while away an hour or so!

What's the ground like?

It is a smallish modern ground, but in a setting that is almost spectacular, next to a lake. Capacity is 15,231, all seated.

Away allocation:

Around 3,300 in the North Stand, with a low roof that gives a chance to create a bit of noise. Catering is as you'd expect (can anyone confirm whether they still offer the excellent "Yorkshire Pudding Wrap", which was a generous helping of roast beef and gravy, wrapped not in a tortilla but in a Yorkshire pudding – delicious!).

If you're spending a bit more time there:

Most Town fans will treat this one as a daytrip, but Doncaster is only half an hour from Sheffield, and not a lot further to York, if you are looking for traditional tourist pursuits, theatre, great shopping or a wider range of amazing pubs and ales. There is a new Hilton Garden Inn at the racecourse, many rooms having fabulous views of the course, with a walking / jogging path that takes you around it, up close to the fences.

Fleetwood Town

Where is it?

Just up beyond Blackpool, on the coast. A fishing port, you may well hear the term “Cod Army!”.

Address: Highbury Stadium, Park Avenue, Fleetwood, FY7 6TX. It is named after the adjacent road, not as a homage to a bigger club from down south (though their home colours might make you think otherwise).

Website: www.fleetwoodtownfc.com

By road:

A14 / A1 / M62 / M61 / M6 / M55 / A585. Or A14 / M6 / M55 / A585. It's a long way – around 5 hours by car, with coaches likely to leave Ipswich at least 8 hours before the game, getting back no earlier than 6 hours after the game.

By rail:

Change at Liverpool St / Euston / Preston / Blackpool North. You can then get a bus to Fleetwood, but you won't do that. Instead, you'll stroll up to the seafront and get a tram. The tram takes you to within a short walk of the ground.

How to fill in time on matchday:

It's worth giving Blackpool a miss if you have never been to Fleetwood. So, get the tram up to the end of the line and explore the town, lifeboat station, and maybe hit a fish & chip shop. There aren't so many pub options near the ground, but there are, of course, many pubs to choose from in the town, and they're likely to be away-friendly. The club bar also admits away fans, though it does get full on matchdays.

What's the ground like?

Modern but small, with a capacity of just over 5,300. The club has risen quickly out of non-league, but the stadium is smart.

Away allocation:

This could be a problem. The maximum away allocation is just over 1,100, of which 600 are on an covered standing terrace. Alcohol is not available at the terrace end. Given this is our only trip to the Blackpool area in the league, this game is likely to sell out.

If you're spending a bit more time there:

There are hotel and B&B options in Fleetwood itself, though most fans are likely to head into Blackpool, where there are options to suit just about any budget. Blackpool offers a huge range of family-friendly (and adult-oriented) activities, including the fabulous Pleasure Beach, at the south end of the town. If you're wanting a quite unusual experience, you could try booking a Pleasure-Beach--facing room at the family-friendly Big Blue Hotel, and have the experience of the old wooden rollercoaster rushing past your window every few minutes! For a more genteel experience, try the resort of Lytham, a few miles up the road, which has fabulous pubs (including The Taps) and some pretty good restaurants.

Gillingham

Where is it?

It's a Medway town, in Kent, so a shortish trip over the Dartford Bridge and turn left.

Address: MEMS Priestfield Stadium, Redfern Avenue, Gillingham, Kent, ME7 4DD

Website: www.gillinghamfootballclub.com

By road:

A12 / M25 / M2 / A278. Remember to pay the Dartford Bridge / Tunnel tolls in each direction – easiest done online (there are no toll booths, and it is too easy to forget). If you are a SatNav addict, please make sure you end up in Gillingham, Kent and not Gillingham, Dorset.

By rail:

The League fixture is on Boxing Day, so trains are unlikely to be an option. This info is valid though for the Papa Johns (EFL) Trophy game. This trip has become easier with the opening of the Ashford high speed line. Change at Stratford for Stratford International, from where it's just over half an hour to Gillingham. The station is about a 10-minute walk from the football ground. So, you can do the trip in a couple of hours, with a bit of luck, with a 22:21 out of Gillingham connecting onto the 23:38 home from Stratford.

How to fill in time on matchday:

Gillingham isn't a major city, and the vast majority of Town fans will treat it as an in-and-out game, stopping maybe just for a few beers pre-match. When it comes to pubs, Gillingham is better than you might expect, even with a dedicated away pub, the Fleur-de-Lys, 10 minutes walk from the ground on the Gillingham Road. There are several town centre options, and a reasonable choice for real and craft ale fans.

What's the ground like?

It holds just over 11,500, and, seen from the away end, it's a neat, tidy, all-seater- and all-covered stadium. The away end, though, is still the big uncovered temporary seated terrace, fine on a nice day but grim when it's cold, wet and windy.

Away allocation:

The away seated terrace, in the Brian Moore Stand (named after the famous ITV commentator who was a Gills fan), holds 1,500. Access to the away end is down a narrow passageway, which permits segregation when required.

If you're spending a bit more time there:

You probably won't be spending a lot of time in or around Gillingham, but it is certainly worthwhile checking out the Historic Dockyard, with some great old warships and a dockyard museum at nearby Chatham (just a mile or so up the road) or the impressive Rochester Castle (3-4 miles away). Shopping addicts might want to stop off at the Bluewater Shopping Centre, which is the Kent side of the Dartford Crossing.

Lincoln City

Where is it?

Lincolnshire – but a part that is very, very hilly. If you turn right off the A1 at Newark, you'll be there pretty soon.

Address: Sincil Bank, Lincoln LN5 8LD

Website: www.redimps.co.uk

By road:

A14 / A1 / A17 from just north of Grantham (or, A46 from Newark). It should take just under 3 hours, making it a relatively short trip. There is no official away fans parking, but street parking worked well last time we were there. There are a number of car parks within walking distance with discounted parking rates offered by the City of Lincoln Council parks (details on the club website).

By rail:

It's a cross-country trip, with changes at least at Peterborough and Newark North Gate. On the return you may also have to change at Newark Castle (and walk to North Gate) and Cambridge too! The ground is a 15-20 minute walk from the station.

How to fill in time on matchday:

Lincoln is a fine, historic and beautiful city, with an imposing cathedral up an unfeasibly steep hill. It also has a very good choice of pubs, bars and eateries, so offers plenty for the visiting football fan. There is a small Fanzone at the ground, open to home and away fans, and the club also has a bar open to all.

What's the ground like?

The stadium is newer than it looks – the eye is always drawn to the tall side stand that seems to stretch only a few yards either side of the halfway line. Capacity is a bit over 10,000.

Away allocation:

The usual away allocation is just 1,000, on one side of the Stacey West Stand behind the goal. Historically, this game has been a sell-out to Town fans. Although it is a 3-hour journey, it feels a bit like a local derby – especially to older fans, who will remember how Lincoln used to be on Anglia's Match of the Week so often!

If you're spending a bit more time there:

It is a really good city to spend an extra day, with excellent shopping and sightseeing, especially the cathedral, which is even more impressive at night-time, as it towers over the city. Lincoln Castle is also well worth a look.

MK Dons

Where is it?

Just off the M1 in Buckinghamshire, about half an hour north of the M25.

Address: Stadium MK, Denbigh, Milton Keynes, Stadium Way, MK1 1ST

Website: www.mkdons.com

By road:

A14 / A428 / A1 / A421. It can be done in just a couple of hours, so is one of our closest games. There is parking at the stadium, though many fans street park on nearby industrial estates or use the various unofficial car parks that open matchdays. Don't park in the adjacent retail park – you'll get a fine.

By rail:

Change at Liverpool St and Euston, journey time around 2-and-a-half to three hours. But note that the stadium is nowhere near a useful station, so you'll rely on buses, taxis or a long walk (Bletchley is 2 miles, Milton Keynes Central is 4 miles away).

How to fill in time on matchday:

Well, there is that retail park, right next to the ground, with lots of shops and chain restaurants. Otherwise, there are a number of pubs in nearby Fenny Stratford (about a mile from the ground – it has a railway station too, but it's on the Bletchley – Bedford branch line).

What's the ground like?

It's big – the capacity is over 30,000 – and quite impressive. Of course, MK Dons don't get anywhere near filling the stadium for their league matches. The ground has been built to a high standard – comfy seats and very good facilities. If you like decent loos, then this is the League One ground to go to!

Away allocation:

The away end is the north-east corner, with an allocation of 3,000. It is a very popular away trip but last time, MK Dons opened up an additional area once we sold our initial allocation.

If you're spending a bit more time there:

The stadium has its own hotel, a decent Hilton Doubletree, which is incredibly convenient for overnighting fans. There are cheaper options, of the Travelodge / Premier Inn type, fairly close by too. Milton Keynes has good shopping and also boasts an indoor ski slope (Snozone) and a nearby indoor skydiving facility too. Just out of town is the concert hall known as The Stables, set up by Cleo Laine and Johnny Dankworth as a rehearsal and performance space – there are great acts on there throughout the year.

Morecambe

Where is it?

On the north-west coast, beyond Blackpool and just short of the Lake District.

Address: Christie Way, Morecambe, LA4 4TB

Website: www.morecambefc.com

By road:

A14 / M6 / A683, or A14 / A1 / M62 / M61 / M6 / A683. Either way is likely to take around 5 hours. There is street parking not too far from the ground. Coaches will leave Portman Road at least 7 hours before kick off, and arrive back around 6 hours after the match.

By rail:

Change at Liverpool St , Euston, and Lancaster, journey time around 5 hours. This is a new stadium and further from town and station than the ground we played at in the FA Cup in January 2001. It is around a half-hour walk from the station.

How to fill in time on matchday:

Morecambe is a traditional seaside resort, with a long, impressive prom (a bit like a curved version of Felixstowe prom!), and a statue of comedian Eric Morecambe for that essential Instagram moment. There are plenty of pub options in town, on the seafront and even a few nearer the ground. One favourite with away fans is the Boardwalk, on the seafront about 10 minutes walk from the ground – it also offers B&B. The historic football pub, the York Hotel, is still a good option, around a 10 minute walk from the ground.

What's the ground like?

It's a kind of modern version of the previous Christie Park stadium, one of the smallest grounds we will visit, with a capacity of 6,476, but one you're likely to enjoy.

Away allocation:

The away end has a terrace of just under 1,400 plus there is a separate seating area for 300. Even though it is a new ground for most Town fans and a seaside trip, we are unlikely to sell out.

If you're spending a bit more time there:

It's the seaside, so it's always going to be a place where fans want to spend more time. It is far enough away that it is well worth stretching the trip by a day or two. Options nearby include Lancaster and the Lake District, or (about an hour to the south) Blackpool.

Oxford United

Where is it?

Just off the M40, about 50 miles out of London

Address: Kassam Stadium, Grenoble Road, Oxford, OX4 4XP

Website: www.oufc.co.uk

By road:

A12 / M25 / M40 (J7) / A329 / B480. Google Maps reckons it takes 2 hours 20 minutes, which suggests they're not worried about points on their licence. We reckon it will take up to 3 hours. There is a large car park at the stadium, though it fills early. Other car parks are available nearby, as well as some street parking.

By rail:

Change at Liverpool St and Paddington, journey time up to 3-and-a-half hours. You also have the option to change at Marylebone, which can work out much cheaper. Some Paddington services add a change at Reading, which is worth avoiding. The ground is 4 miles out of town, so it's a bus or taxi. Buses are frequent but pretty indirect, taking at least half an hour, so allow plenty of time to get there. And back.

How to fill in time on matchday:

The nearby bowling alley, Ozone, has a couple of restaurants but the choice of pubs near the ground is quite limited, as you might expect. You're likely to have to walk at least a mile, and so most fans will opt to have a few beers in town before getting the bus to the stadium. Luckily, the city centre has some excellent drinking and eating options.

What's the ground like?

It is still three-sided, which feels a bit odd, and holds 12,500.

Away allocation:

The away end is in the North Stand, a sideways view, towards the open end. So you will be able to see if the ball has hit your car parked behind that end. The away allocation is as many as 5,000, so we are not expecting to sell out.

If you're spending a bit more time there:

Don't be scared by the apparent murder rate in the Oxford area – Inspector Morse was fiction. Oxford is a great, historic university city, attracting huge numbers of tourists each year. If you like wonderful historic buildings, can tolerate the thousands of tourists, and avoid all the souvenir shops you ever feared existed, then Oxford's your place. It is great for pubs and restaurants too.

Plymouth Argyle

Where is it?

In the South-West, a long trip but a great place to visit.

Address: Home Park, Plymouth, PL2 3DQ

Website: www.paafc.co.uk

By road:

A12 / M25 / M3 / A303 / M5, or A12 / M25 / M4 / M5, or A14 / M6 / M42 / M5. It is one of the longer trips, likely to take around 5 hours. Official coaches are likely to leave Ipswich at least 7 hours before the game, and arrive back around 6 hours after the game. The ground is about half a mile up from the city centre, at one end of a park with great views. There is free parking around the ground and nearby – if car parks are full, there are street parking possibilities.

By rail:

Change at Liverpool St and Paddington. It will take around 5 hours. The ground is about a 15-20 minute walk from Plymouth station, but it is very uphill.

How to fill in time on matchday:

Plymouth has a large shopping centre, an attractive marina and seafront, and plenty of naval history to explore. Add to that some great pubs and restaurants, and it's easy to see how to while away any spare matchday time.

What's the ground like?

It is an impressive, modern stadium, with a capacity of 20,000, but it feels more atmospheric than many modern grounds.

Away allocation:

The away end is behind the goal, with an allocation of 1,300, though this can often be expanded to 2,022. Although it is likely to be a popular game, the distance involved means we are unlikely to sell out. Being half-term though, and with ITFC Women playing locally the next day, we may well take more than we usually would,

If you're spending a bit more time there:

Plymouth definitely deserves to be explored. It is attractive, with loads to do – large enough to take some time to explore and small enough to cover over a day or two at a leisurely pace. Last time we were there, we discovered some great pubs and restaurants down by the waterfront.

ITFC Women are playing away to Plymouth the next day, so it is a great chance to take in both games and have a great night out in-between!

Portsmouth

Where is it?

On the south coast, east of Southampton, and close to the Isle of Wight.

Address: Fratton Park, Frogmore Road, Portsmouth, PO4 8RA

Website: www.portsmouthfc.co.uk

By road:

A12 / M25 / A3 / M27 / A27 / A2030. In theory it is about a 3 hour trip, but you'll need to allow for delays, especially around the M25. The stadium car park is the opposite end to the away end, so not ideal. There are unofficial car parks nearby, but many fans street park.

By rail:

Change at Liverpool St and Waterloo, with an expected journey time of just under 4 hours. The nearest station to the ground is Fratton, about a 10 minute walk. Otherwise, Portsmouth & Southsea station is around a 30 minute walk (or a short train ride to Fratton + a 10 minute walk). Being an evening game, you won't be able to get back to Ipswich after the match, though there is a train back to London.

How to fill in time on matchday:

There are a number of decent pubs within a half-mile or so of the ground; it may be that the first one you find is home fans only, but don't worry, you'll soon find one where you're welcome. There is a wider choice of pubs in the city centre, including a couple of Wetherspoons. If you are very early into Portsmouth, then it's a great idea to hit the naval history offering, described at the end of this page.

What's the ground like?

It is a proper old-fashioned ground, with a great atmosphere and loud home support. The ground holds 21,000, so it is one of the larger League One grounds we'll visit.

Away allocation:

The away end is one half of the Milton End, and the usual allocation is 1,400, though on occasion a higher allocation can be agreed. We expect this to be a very popular game, so there's a real chance that the lower end of the allocation could sell out.

If you're spending a bit more time there:

Of course there's shopping and pubs, but the real glory of Portsmouth is its naval history. Head down to the harbour to see the National Museum of the Royal Navy, HMS Victory, the Mary Rose and HMS Warrior. You can also catch a ferry over to the Isle of Wight, which has two types of heritage railway – one steam, and one electric (though that one now uses very smart refurbished ex-tube rolling stock!). We were surprised to learn that there is still a hovercraft service to the Isle of Wight too – that has to be worth doing, if only to show the kids how some of us used to cross the Channel to France!

Rotherham United

Where is it?

South Yorkshire, not far from Sheffield

Address: AESSEAL New York Stadium, New York Way, Rotherham, S60 1AH

Website: www.themillers.co.uk

By road:

A14 / A1 / A57 / M1 / A6178 / A630. It should take around 3 hours, so not the longest of trips. There is no car parking at the ground for away fans (apart from disabled, bookable in advance), but there are plenty of car parks within a short walk. Another option is to park at Sheffield's Meadowhall shopping centre and take a 6-minute train or tram journey.

By rail:

It is marginally quicker to change at Peterborough / Doncaster (three-and-a-half hours) than Liverpool St / Kings Cross / Doncaster (4 hours and a bit). Given this is a relatively new stadium, it is great to find that it's only a short walk from the railway station. The match is on Good Friday, so there is a high risk of engineering works disrupting some or all train lines.

How to fill in time on matchday:

You won't be spoilt for choice when it comes to town centre pubs, though one or two nearest the ground may well be home fans only. If you are travelling via Sheffield, which is only a 12 minute train ride away, then the Sheffield Tap (platform one) is an essential stopover, noting that football colours are not permitted.

What's the ground like?

It is very modern – it opened in 2012 – and of simple single-tier construction. Capacity is a compact 12,000, but it is an enclosed bowl, which seems always to improve the atmosphere.

Away allocation:

The away end is the Mears Stand, with an allocation of 2,500. It is a very good away day, and it's usually a reasonably quick journey home, so we generally take a good following.

If you're spending a bit more time there:

Town fans looking to extend the trip are likely to stay in Sheffield, which is only a short (12 minute) train ride (or slightly longer tram trip) away. Sheffield has a huge out-of-town shopping centre at Meadowhall, a fabulous choice of wonderful pubs (it's one of those places where we seem to discover a new favourite every time we go), and a wide choice of hotels to suit all budgets. A major student city, nightlife is good, quite apart from theatres and museums too.

Sheffield Wednesday

Where is it?

South Yorkshire, a major city with a vibrant social scene.

Address: Hillsborough, Sheffield, S6 1SW

Website: www.swfc.co.uk

By road:

A14 / A1 / A57 / M1 / A630. It should take around 3 hours, so not the longest of trips. There is no car parking at the ground for away fans (apart from disabled, bookable in advance), but there are plenty of car parks and some street parking within a short walk. Another option is to park at Sheffield's Meadowhall shopping centre and take a tram (with a change in the city centre).

By rail:

It is marginally quicker to change at Peterborough / Doncaster (three-and-a-half hours) than Liverpool St / St Pancras (4 hours and a bit). The easiest way out to the stadium is by tram – the stadium is three miles out of town.

How to fill in time on matchday:

There is a wide choice of pubs on the way to the ground from all directions, and an even better choice in the city itself. Sheffield is a city where most people will confidently nominate their favourite pub, yet you will probably still find another that you decide is even better. It is worth exploring! Almost opposite the away end is one of the best football-ground fish & chip shops in the country.

What's the ground like?

It is a huge, traditional, iconic stadium with a great atmosphere. Capacity is 39,732.

Away allocation:

The away end is the upper tier of the Leppings Lane end, with an allocation of 3,700. It is possibly the best away end of the whole season – a great view from an elevated position but you still feel near to the action. It is usually unreserved seating, so get in early to reserve the best spots (noting, in the first few rows, everyone will sit throughout).

If you're spending a bit more time there:

There is a great choice of hotels in Sheffield, making it very tempting to stretch the trip by a day or two. In addition to all those great pubs, there is the huge out-of-town shopping centre at Meadowhall, and the Peak District is just out of town. A major student city, so nightlife is good, quite apart from theatres and museums too.

Shrewsbury Town

Where is it?

Near some beautiful countryside, the far side of Birmingham. Head towards Wolverhampton and keep going for another 30 miles, past Telford. If you continue another 9 miles, you'll be in Wales.

Address: Montgomery Waters Meadow, Oteley Road, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6ST

Website: www.shrewsburytown.com

By road:

A14 / M6 / M54 / A5. It may take as little as three-and-a-half hours, but much of the route is notorious for delays, so do allow plenty of extra time. There is no away parking at the stadium, nor in the adjacent retail park or nearby streets, but there are a number of unofficial car parks nearby. Coaches are likely to leave around 6 hours before the game, and return home around 5 hours after the game.

By rail:

Change at Ely / Birmingham (a bit over 5 hours), or Liverpool St / Euston / Birmingham (a bit over 4-and-a-half hours), or Liverpool St / Euston / Crewe (just under 5 hours). The station is a couple of miles (40 minute walk) from the ground, though there is a range of bus options, especially for daytime games.

How to fill in time on matchday:

There is a retail park next to the ground, with a number of chain eateries and a supermarket café. There are reasonable pub options in the area around the ground and also in the town centre (one Town fan has told us he is really looking forward to spending some time in Shrewsbury as the pubs are so good). At the ground, there is a small Fanzone which is open to all fans.

What's the ground like?

A small, modern stadium, with 4 separate single-tier stands, and a capacity of just 10,000.

Away allocation:

The away end is the North Stand, holding up to 1,800 fans, including a disabled platform.

If you're spending a bit more time there:

The club's website has the following suggestions for fans wanting to extend their stay:

"Shrewsbury is the county town of Shropshire and is set on the banks of the meandering River Severn. The town itself has a long history and many of the buildings date back to the 16th century and beyond.

Shrewsbury has a lovely mix of high-street stores and local boutiques and there are many pubs, restaurants and bars scattered across the town centre.

For more information on where to stay and what to do visit www.visitshrewsbury.co.uk"

Sunderland

Where is it?

In the North-East, half an hour beyond Middlesbrough, and not far from Newcastle.

Address: Sunderland Stadium of Light, Sunderland, SR5 1SU

Website: www.safc.com

By road: Around 4 and a half to 5 hours, the obvious route is the A14 / A1 / A19. Official coaches are likely to leave at least 8 hours before kick off and arrive back around 6 hours after the end of the game. Parking around the stadium is limited but there is plenty of parking available in the Town Centre. There is a Park and Ride scheme from the Sunderland Enterprise Park on Wessington Way (A1231) which is accessible from the A19 and a Park and Walk scheme from the University of Sunderland Campus.

By rail: Cross country options are available from Ipswich via Peterborough and Newcastle (some options require additional changes at Cambridge or York). At Newcastle you take the Metro to the Stadium of Light or St Peters. Or go via London and change at Liverpool St / Kings Cross / Newcastle. It is a very short walk to the stadium from the suggested Metro stations, and only about 15-20 minutes' walk from Sunderland city centre.

How to fill in time on matchday:

There is a Fanzone outside the stadium, open to home and away fans. There are also many pubs and clubs within a short walk, most of which are away-friendly. If the weather's good and you have a bit of time, it's only a 20 minute walk to the seafront, where you will also find pubs worth visiting. The town centre has reasonable shops and places for a bite to eat.

What's the ground like?

It's the biggest ground in League One by some distance, holding 49,000. It's unlikely to be full for our visit, but that won't stop the home fans making plenty of noise.

Away allocation:

The away end is the upper tier of the North Stand, and the usual allocation is 3,000. Given the size of the stadium, you would expect an upper tier to be quite high up, and you wouldn't be wrong, so expect plenty of stairs. It's a great view from up there, but you'll have to shout to be heard at pitch level.

If you're spending a bit more time there:

This is our only trip to the north-east this season (unless we get a cup game...), so many Town fans will find the excuse to spend a night or two in the city of Newcastle. It is rightly famous for its pubs, clubs, bars and restaurants, though sadly the one that did the "curry hell challenge" is no longer there. It is just a short metro journey to Sunderland. For those wanting to stay closer, Sunderland also has some reasonable pubs, and hotels tend to be cheaper – there's even a hotel right next to the stadium. It is not generally thought of as a seaside trip, but that is unfair, as the beach area is great.

Wigan Athletic

Where is it?

In the North-West, a bit beyond Manchester

Address: DW Stadium, Loire Drive, Wigan, WN5 0UZ

Website: www.wiganathletic.com

By road: Around 4 and a half to 5 hours, either A14 / M6 / A49 or the A14 / A1 / M62 / M6 / A49. Official coaches are likely to leave at least 8 hours before kick off and arrive back around 6 hours after the end of the game. There is a large car park at the stadium, though it can take a long while to exit the stadium area afterwards. Otherwise, there is street parking and town centre options around 20 minutes' walk away.

By rail: Change at Liverpool St and Euston – it is around a 5-hour trip. The stadium is about a 20 minute walk from Wigan North-West (or Wallgate) stations.

How to fill in time on matchday:

There are plenty of town centre pubs, and even a few options a bit closer to the ground, and a busy, if compact, town centre. Wigan is famous for pies, so it's not difficult to recommend what to eat! The bravest might try a 'Wigan Kebab', which is a meat-and-potato pie inside a barm cake (bap). Many fans will explore the large retail park next to the ground, with large branches of many national chains. Away fans have access to a large bar at the stadium, with tv screens.

What's the ground like?

It's a big, modern ground, and is unlikely to be full. The overwhelming feeling is that it is satisfactorily blue in colour. Outside is a statue of Dave Whelan – the sculptor was Sean Hedges=Quinn, who was responsible for the statues outside Portman Road.

Away allocation:

The away end is the North Stand, behind the goal, with an allocation of up to 4,800. It is certainly one of the better away ends...

If you're spending a bit more time there:

Wigan is handily-placed to explore the north-west, and anyone wanting to spend more time away might well be enticed into Liverpool or Manchester, with excellent shopping, restaurants, pubs and nightlife – as well as vast cultural options.

Wycombe Wanderers

Where is it?

Turn right off the M25 onto the M40 and you'll soon be close.

Address: Adams Park, Hillbottom Road, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP12 4HJ

Website: www.wycombewanderers.co.uk

By road:

A12 / M25 / M40 / A4010. Google maps suggests it will take 2 hours. We think that is very optimistic. There is a car park at the stadium, but it does take a long time to escape after the game, as the stadium is at the far end of a long single access road. Unofficial car parks can be found all along that road. If you arrive fairly early, there is street parking within a mile or so of the stadium.

By rail:

Change at Liverpool St / Marylebone. It is scheduled to take nearly 3 hours, but you might cut half an hour or so off if you are lucky with tubes. The bad news is that the ground is almost 3 miles from the station, so almost an hour's walk. There is a limited shuttle bus from the station matchdays, or you can catch a more frequent bus from the bus station, around a 10 minute walk from the rail station.

How to fill in time on matchday:

There are bars at the ground which welcome away fans, and there is a marquee outside the away end which is only for away fans. This proved highly popular last time we were there. Otherwise, there isn't a lot around the ground, as it is a mile or so into an industrial estate. There are of course several pubs between town and ground, but you'll need to make an early start to take advantage, given it's a long walk.

What's the ground like?

It's a smaller ground, capacity 10,000, with a particularly large stand along one side. It feels a bit like a smaller version of Peterborough's ground.

Away allocation:

The away end is the Dreams Stand, a modern, all-seated end which holds 2,000. For larger away followings, a further 350 seats may be available in the Main Stand (which is opposite the big stand, known as the Frank Adams Stand). Although this is a large away allocation, it is likely to be very popular with Town fans, as it is one of our shorter awaydays.

If you're spending a bit more time there:

Given that High Wycombe is only 25 minutes by train from Marylebone, we suspect that the majority of Town fans wanting to spend more time away from home will focus on the attractions of the capital.