

3. SPONSORSHIP PRICING GUIDE

A practical guide for grassroots sports clubs in Tendring

Introduction

One of the biggest challenges grassroots sports clubs face when raising sponsorship is deciding how much to charge.

Many clubs either underprice their sponsorship because they lack confidence, overprice out of a lack of realistic expectations, or avoid setting prices altogether because they are worried about getting it wrong.

This guide is designed to help clubs set fair, realistic, and justifiable sponsorship prices based on the size of their club, the assets they can offer, and what local businesses are likely to view as good value.

It is not about maximising income at all costs. It is about setting prices that make sense, are easy to explain, and help build long-term relationships with local sponsors.

A note on experience and evidence

This guidance is informed by real-world experience.

Over many years, we have reviewed hundreds of sponsorship packs from grassroots sports clubs across football, cricket, rugby, bowls, sailing, and other community sports.

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These packs range from very small volunteer-run clubs to large, well-established community organisations.

While no two clubs are the same, clear pricing patterns and ranges emerge. This guide reflects those patterns and provides sensible benchmarks rather than rigid rules.

Step 1: Understand what sponsorship pricing really is

Sponsorship pricing is not about selling advertising space in the same way a newspaper or billboard does.

Local sponsorship is about:

- Visibility over time
- Familiarity and trust
- Association with a community organisation
- Supporting something people care about

Because of this, sponsorship pricing is usually lower than commercial advertising, but often more effective locally.

Clubs should not compare themselves to national advertising rates. They should compare themselves to other local opportunities a business could buy.



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Step 2: Avoid the two most common pricing mistakes

There are three common mistakes that clubs make when pricing what they want to take to the market to sell. In fact, these are not unique to clubs and volunteers, sometimes the biggest organisations in the world make these mistakes, what you are doing is **not easy**...

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Mistake 1: Pricing too low “just in case”

This is the most common mistake.

Many clubs set prices very low because they:

- worry about being rejected
- do not want to feel awkward asking for money
- assume local businesses cannot afford more

This often leads to:

- sponsors undervaluing the partnership
- clubs struggling to increase prices later
- volunteers feeling the effort is not worth the return

Low pricing does not guarantee success. Clear value and confidence matter more.

Mistake 2: Pricing without explanation

A price with no explanation feels arbitrary to a business.

If a club cannot clearly explain:

- what is included
- who will see it
- how often it will be seen
- why it represents good local value

then even a reasonable price can feel unjustified.

Sponsors are far more comfortable when pricing is explained calmly and logically.

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Mistake 3: Pricing too high because expectations are unrealistic

Some clubs set prices based on:

- what they would like to earn
- what a larger or better-resourced club charges
- comparisons with professional or semi-professional sport

This can lead to:

- repeated rejection
- stalled conversations
- sponsors disengaging early

High prices are not wrong in themselves, but they must be supported by:

- clear assets
- consistent visibility
- reliable delivery



If sponsors regularly hesitate or walk away, pricing may be too high for the club's current position.



I would much rather sell something too cheaply, than not at all, but this is a personal preference.

Mistake 4: Refusing to negotiate when it would help

Some clubs treat sponsorship prices as fixed and non-negotiable.

In reality, negotiation does not always mean lowering the price. It can mean adjusting what is included, or changing the length of the agreement, or focusing on assets that suit the sponsor better and even spreading payments over time. There are many ways to make a sponsorship work better for both parties without costing the club anything. Flexibility often leads to stronger, longer-term partnerships. See our guide on negotiating for more.

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A simple rule of thumb

If you are going to make one of these mistakes, make Mistake 1.

Pricing slightly too low:

- keeps you in the game
- builds relationships that you can work on making more profitable
- allows you to learn and adjust

Pricing too high, with no flexibility, often ends the conversation completely and takes away any future opportunities with that target.

Also, if a sponsor agrees immediately without hesitation, take that as feedback. It may indicate that your pricing is too low and could be reviewed next time.

Step 3: Use club size as a starting point

One of the simplest and fairest ways to think about pricing is by club size, particularly the number of active members and regular attendees.

As a broad guide:

Small clubs: Up to 75 active members

These clubs usually have:

- A tight hyperlocal audience
- Strong personal relationships
- Limited but loyal visibility

Sponsorship prices often sit at the lower end, but still carry meaningful value.

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Medium clubs: Up to 75-150 active members

These clubs usually have:

- Regular multiple days' activity each week
- More consistent footfall
- Wider reach within the community

It goes without saying that these clubs can charge more for the same thing compared to a smaller club, unless that 'thing' isn't predicated on club membership (say, for example, a road facing board owned by the club).

Large clubs: Over 150 active members

Usually with:

- Many teams or sections
- High weekly usage, most days of the week
- Strong local recognition

Club size cannot guarantee revenue size, but it helps greatly, but whichever you are make sure you lean in to the unique selling points.

Some starting points, all per season:

Item	Small club	Medium club	Large club
Main club sponsor	£500-£1k	£1k-£2k	£2k-£5k
Matchday sponsor	£150-£300	£300-£600	£600-£1.2k
Social media mentions	£100-£200	£200-£400	£400-£800
Team sponsor	£250-£500	£500-£1k	£1k-£2.5k

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Step 4: Think in ranges, not fixed prices

Pricing does not need to be exact.

Most successful sponsorship packs use price ranges rather than single fixed figures.

For example:

- “From £250 per season”
- “Typically £500–£750 per year”

This allows flexibility while still anchoring expectations.

It also makes it easier to adapt pricing for:

- Different businesses
- Different assets
- Different lengths of commitment

Step 5: Compare sponsorship to other local options

A helpful way to sanity-check pricing is to ask: *What else could this business spend the same money on locally?* For example:

- A small advert in a local magazine or newspaper
- A few weeks of Facebook or Google ads
- Sponsoring a local event or leaflet print

Many local businesses spend hundreds of pounds per year on marketing that delivers brief or easily forgotten exposure. By comparison, sponsorship offers, repeated visibility, familiarity over months, oodles of trust through association. If your pricing is in a similar range, it is usually reasonable.

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Step 6: Avoid talking in technical marketing terms

Even if you know what these things mean, you do not need to calculate CPMs, impressions, or engagement rates.

Local sponsorship works because:

- People see the same name repeatedly
- They recognise it over time
- They associate it with a club they care about

Simple explanations are more effective than marketing jargon.

For example:

- *“Our sponsors are seen by players, families, and visitors every week throughout the season.”*
- *“Your name becomes familiar to people who live and spend money locally.”*

Step 7: Price for the relationship, not just the asset

Sponsorship works best when it is treated as a **partnership**, not a transaction.

This means pricing should allow:

- A business to feel good about supporting
- The club to feel properly supported in return
- The relationship to continue year after year

If a sponsor feels stretched or unsure, they are unlikely to renew. If pricing feels fair and manageable, renewals become much easier.



Once you have a deal, the focus shifts to making them feel good about it. Good service = a better chance of renewal

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Step 8: Be confident and consistent

Confidence matters more than precision.

Clubs that:

- Set clear prices
- Explain them calmly
- Apply them consistently

are far more successful than clubs that constantly apologise for asking.

Sponsors expect clubs to have thought about pricing. Clear, reasonable figures build trust, and trust sells.

Final thoughts

There is no single “correct” sponsorship price.

What matters is that prices are:

- Thought through and that stand up to questioning
- Easy to explain
- Fair for both sides
- Sustainable over time

This guide is designed to help clubs move away from guesswork and towards confident, consistent pricing that supports long-term income and relationships.