

LEIGHTON UNITED FOOTBALL CLUB

EST. 1985





Respect

Leighton United FC are proud to have achieved and retained the Charter Standard Development Club accreditation and are active supporters of FA Respect.

We pride ourselves on being an active member of the local community to promote grassroots football as a sport for young children to get involved with.

Football Philosophy...

“ Through the continuous development and provision of challenging, but supportive learning environments that see no differential between training or game time, we will consistently provide every appropriate opportunity to equip all our players with a variety of capabilities to adapt to multiple scenarios ~ enabling them to develop and deliver effective and creative playing solutions. ”

WELCOME TO OUR CLUB

Leighton United FC can trace its roots back to the founding of a single local team established in 1985 by a group of parents who formed the team of U12s to play in local grassroots leagues.

The first recorded name for the club was BR Foxes FC (BR representing Brooklands Residents - a suburb in the nearby town of Leighton Buzzard town in South Bedfordshire) with many the initial players coming from the local area.

The club's original blue and white team colours and the use of 'foxes' in the club name came about after the founders visited Leicester City and wanted to model the club around the same friendly, family atmosphere experienced at Leicester. In those very early days a day out to visit Leicester City was a regular feature of the season for players to experience the atmosphere of professional league football.

In 1989 the club decided to change its name to Leighton Foxes FC. By then the club had expanded from the original team to six new youth teams and creating a dedicated development section offering coaching to under 9 players from the local area (one of the first clubs to do so). At the same time club also chose to adopt a more professional approach, by appointing a head coach, and also fielded an adult men's and woman's teams (back then the club even had a netball team). Over time, our adult and teenage teams become extremely successful in local and national league competitions.



Less than a year later in 1990 the club was able to purchase three hectares of farmland near the village of Tilsforth and set the foundations of five real grass football pitches. The main sources of finances were a mortgage, some personal loans from three trustees and extensive fund-raising activities. In subsequent years a dedicated driveway, car park and a permanent building was constructed.

As our club grew so did our reputation attracting players from all over the area to join us and help us build the club to what it has become today when we Regularly field 25+ teams across many age groups.



DEVELOPING OUR CLUB



As a demonstration of our club's continuing commitment to provide footballing facilities for local young players, the next major landmark in the club's history was a project to build of clubhouse on the site in which was completed and opened October 2007. The club partnered with and received funding support from the Football Foundation. This was complimented by a comprehensive set of pitch upgrades to provide significantly improved real grass playing surfaces that are now considered to be among the best in the area. Our clubhouse was opened by England World Cup Football Hero, Sir Geoff Hurst.

Leighton United is now operated as a totally self-funding not-for-profit voluntary sporting organisation that has continued to be managed by a group of committed volunteers who give up their time and expertise. These volunteers comprise of a elected Management Committee and a group of FA certified coaches who together work with the families in the club to continue the founding mission to provide opportunities for anyone in the local community who has an interest in grassroots football.

In the 35 years since the inception of our club, we have provided football opportunities for thousands of young players and annually field 25 or more teams between the ages or 7 and 18 playing in a range of Saturday and/or Sunday leagues. We are proud to have been among the first youth clubs in the country to provide dedicated girls football teams alongside our compliment of boys/mixed teams to help encourage and develop the female side of the game.



We have evolved the development section into a free to participate Mini Soccer Academy which now offers local junior players between the age of 5 and 7 opportunities to learn and play football under the expert guidance of highly experienced and qualified coaches who work with young players to prepare them to join full time teams either in our club or with other clubs.

We focus on getting the fundamentals right to provide a strong foundation for our teams to enjoy playing, learning and supporting grassroots football in a safe and secure environment. All coaches are at least qualified to minimum FA Level 1 (with more than half having higher qualifications) and the club actively encourages players aged 16 and over to take up coaching also providing them with support to gain FA qualifications and develop experience. These investments have seen many of our teams and players achieve notable successes both on and off the pitch.

OUR APPROACH TO FOOTBALL



Leighton United FC is a club founded on core principles of continuous development, directed guidance, and dedicated support for youth footballers. We focus considerable attention on helping each and every one of our players and teams develop the skills, experience and capabilities they need to play their best football at all times.

As LUFC Head Coach - Craig Wells (pictured right) - works with all of our coaching staff and players to deliver a curriculum of training, education and practice that achieves good footballing ability, general fitness and above all, delivers requisite enjoyment of football. The mission of the club and coaching programme we have developed is to provide all of our players with the requisite information, conditions and environment for them to thrive in their respective footballing aspirations and opportunities on and off the pitch.

We focus on the consistent delivery of simple, practical, demonstrably proven, training methods and always seek to enhance our solutions with modernised learning and techniques to keep our coaches and players at the fore front of youth football development.

We continue to develop and evolve a core Football Philosophy that combines the best of contemporary training practices with extensive local knowledge and historical experience to achieve a clear set of reference points for footballing development that is optimised for the abilities of all of our player age groups.

We have always been and remain a strong advocate and collaborator of both national and county level football associations and league organisations and proactively seek to participate in initiatives which further the development of grassroots football at all levels locally and nationally to further the development of the youth game.



★ Football should naturally be played with an approach that is efficient, economical, measured, possession, where passing quality combined with intelligent and timely support and movement lead to progress and penetration through the thirds of the field to provide goal-scoring opportunities when counter attacking opportunities are denied.

★ To defend effectively and efficiently: a team should ideally play with a controlled, calculated and assertive approach where all players contribute and have a clear understanding of the tactical objectives being used to regain possession of the ball.

★ The game will allow and encourage all players to contribute to the attacking phase with variety, audacity and with considered risk taking and in the defending phase with understanding, assertiveness and decisiveness

★ Football should be fun to participate in – competition should be introduced progressively

★ Footballing practice must be appropriate to a players age and abilities

★ Encourage mastery of fundamentals before doing any fancy stuff

★ Develop individual in parallel with team skills and capabilities

★ Teach players to self evaluate themselves for improvements

★ Apply FA 4-Corner development model for maximum benefit

"You should not teach children to win the game, you should teach children to play the game..."

Jose Mourinho

HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR FACILITIES 5



Leighton United FC is one of a small handful of youth football clubs in the region to have our own dedicated playing grounds located just outside Leighton Buzzard town with easy access to the A5 and other major road systems.

Since we acquired the land in 1990, successive generations of management has worked tirelessly and applied considerable year-on-year investment to develop the site into a professional facility for young children to enjoy playing football.

Our current site comprises of real grass pitches to the front and rear of our club house catering for 5, 7, 9 and 11 a-side matches supporting all age groups that we have at the club.

Our pitches are professionally managed and maintained to a high standard and we are privileged to be able to provide this to our teams and visiting clubs as an exemplar of a premier grade venue for grassroots football.

In addition to our own facilities we are one of a select group of youth football clubs which provide support and sponsorship for the 3G all weather pitch facility located behind Cedars Middle School in Leighton Buzzard. Our club utilises this facility during winter months and we remain a proactive member of the oversight committee that manages the facility on behalf of the local community around Leighton and Linslade.



5mph maximum speed on site



Full medical kits available on site



Defibrillator unit available on site



Male, Female and Disabled toilets



Car parking available on site



Recycling of waste and rubbish



Seating inside and outside



24x7 full time CCTV surveillance



Telephone available in club house



Strictly no smoking anywhere



No animals except guide dogs

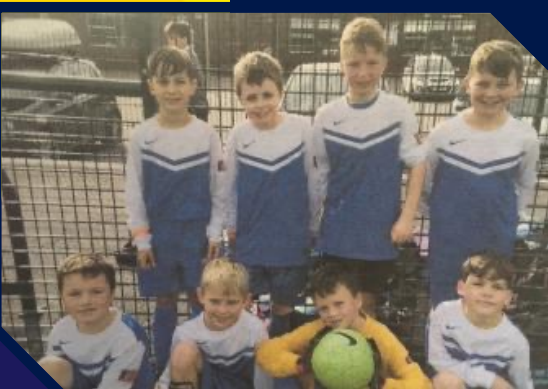
SUPPORTING THE COMMUNITY



McDonalds 6 A-Side Charity Tournament ~ 2005



ABF The Soldiers' Charity Bicycle Ride ~ 2017



Doverly Down FC Year 4 wearing kit donated by LUFC ~ 2015

Since the very beginning of our club we have been a strong advocate of building strong links with and working with our local community and this ethos has continued to be a core part of our operating philosophy. We have been and will continue to be a prominent and proactive member of the location communities around us and will always be willing to help with local events, charitable activities and other community related activities.

We believe in being a strong role model in the local community for all forms of sports and community activities not just football and as such our facilities has been host to a whole range of events ranging from charity events, celebration events, other forms of organised activities that bring local people together. There have been too many events in our history to list here but a few notable mentions are below:

- ★ Various fun runs and rides including The Soldiers' Charity Bicycle Ride (2017) which used our facilities as the staging centre both starting and finishing at the site
- ★ Various donations of football kit and equipment including to local schools teams such as Doverly Down FC as they prepared for their final season tournaments
- ★ Hosting several national events for organisations such as McDonald's raising money for their Ronald McDonald Children's Charity supporting disadvantaged children
- ★ Participating in various prestigious events fund raising for national and international causes including fielding a team against Arsenal Ex-professional & Celebrity XIs



Arsenal Ex-Professional & Celebrity XI versus Leighton United XI Charity Match ~ 2016

Steve Punshon @StevePunshon · 22 Jun 2019

Outstanding tourno hosting @LeightonLtd for Minis Schools. Quick turnarounds, good organisation & marshalls managing new coaches to encourage. Are we bold enough to use the format as a template & link school, community, club? @BedsFA @BerksBucksFA @FA



EXTENDING THE COMMUNITY

All of our players, families, coaches, committee members, and helpers are drawn from a diverse local and international community. Indirectly and directly via our families, we are connected to an extended network of countries, events, organisations and initiatives which we cultivate and mature proactively whenever we can to facilitate the good causes, but also specifically to build relationships with organisations and academic institutions to promote good health for children from participation in active sports.

**LEIGHTON
Linslade
School Games**

Leighton & Linslade Schools Sports



We have partnered with local sporting organisations like Leighton Linslade School Sports Partnership to host girls and mixed junior football events, brought our football skills challenges to events organised by schools such as Greenleas, Doverly Down and Gilbert Inglefield schools as well as providing training at many other venues.

We have played host to a large number of local schools at our tournament events as well as providing facilities for schools teams at as Doverly Down FC as well as providing our facilities for schools to host their own events. Internationally we have build relationships in Europe, United States, Africa, and even as far afield as New Zealand – providing kits and equipment to help establish teams and providing opportunities for international players to join our club.



Top – Bottom – Various Photos from Hosted School Events

Kalabo Village FC wearing LUFC kit – Zambia 2020

Sazira School FC wearing LUFC kit – Tanzania 2013 - with guest player Neel Slater

FOOTBALLING DEVELOPMENT



Respect

Bedfordshire FA



One of the key principles in our football development is the creation and promotion of pathways for players to continue to develop their football beyond our club. We aim to provide players with pathways designed to allow them to progress with football in clubs which can provide them with opportunities to extent themselves whether they have aspirations of turning professional, semi-professional or simply for leisure.

To achieve this our club has cultivated strong prosperous relationships with football institutions, leagues and clubs across a broad spectrum of situations, opportunities and facilities. We work closely with Bedfordshire FA and when required, the English FA that our players have access to options which fit in with own ambitions.

This encompasses much more than just footballing related activities but also - when available - includes access to higher education which has specific affiliation to football allowing players to balance their formal and sporting training concurrently. Such offerings include B-Tech and other qualifications in sports science and football provided by local education institutions in conjunction with an affiliated football club - such as Luton Town and Dunstable Town.

Our club was one of the first in this area to create a dedicated junior development process - currently realised in the form of Mini Soccer Sessions - and we continue player development for as long as they remain with our club progressing their skills, abilities and confidence as they grow in age between the ages of 5 to 18 years.

Our coaching and development practice aims to provide support for players as they improve and as they grow older our aim is to provide access to a wider range of facilities and environments outside our club with our partner clubs and affiliations. Many of these relationships can eventually lead to academy situations if desired.



PROMOTING YOUTH FOOTBALL

We do only  positive.

As you can imagine, our primary focus is promoting, developing and maturing grassroots football not just in our club but also in other clubs that we collaborate with. We take pride in being able to represent grassroots football and being able to assist in its continuing development.



We have developed strong mutual beneficial relationships with footballing organisations like The FA, Bedfordshire FA and The Football Foundation as well as Sport England and other general sporting bodies as a means to collectively improve.

Over the years our club has been host to numerous football development camps, and other special activities providing structured development for young players and have been recognised both locally and nationally for what we have achieved even winning the coveted Charter Standard Community Club of the Year award in 2007.

We have previously teamed up with Luton Town, Manchester United, Sir Bobby Charlton's Soccer School, MK Dons and Arsenal to offer directed football training and development, and even hosted Dover Down FC at our facilities for an entire year as part of development partnerships.



Luton Town FC Community Trust Mini Soccer



Sir Bobby Charlton Soccer School – International



One of our teams receiving the FA's Annual Fair Play Award in 2019



We are continuing to grow our all-girls football teams



Duke to honour heroes



Staff
HRH The Duke of Cambridge is to welcome 150 grassroots heroes to Buckingham Palace

LUFC chosen to represent grassroots clubs at gala dinner



OUR PEOPLE ARE OUR STRENGTH

Our club is managed and operated entirely by volunteers who provide their expertise and their time for the sole benefit of the teams and players we support.

We are then fortunate to have strong support from a parent group that shares our passion for youth football and seeing children develop into keen footballers. Many of our parents help out on match days and events to help us run things smoothly.

As a not-for-profit sporting organisation all of our funds goes back into the club to continue to improve our facilities and capabilities, to maintain our grounds and buildings, and to cover general overheads.

We adhere to the principles of non-profit operations at all times and seek to deliver genuine quantifiable value to our teams, players and coaches throughout the football season and out season.

Our structure revolves around a management committee that comprises of the following functions:

Honorary President	Club President	Club Chairman	Vice Chairman	Club Secretary
Head of Coaching	Club Finance	Coach Mentoring	Equipment	Events Manager
Communications	Sponsorship	League Secretaries	Club Welfare Officers	Facilities

This management organisation deals with the functioning of the club facilities leaving the coaching teams free to concentrate on football, their teams and their players. We are currently able to field 36 qualified coaches and assistants all trained by The FA to a minimum of Level One standards, however, we have a growing number of coaches at Level Two and above, and several specialist Goalkeeping Coaches too.

This operating model allows us to offer a broader spectrum of coaching capabilities and experience compared to the majority of other local clubs. Our club can focus 100% on players and player development, so we can provide the best possible service and continue to do so to consistently high standards. We are passionate about what we do and our best days happen we see young children having fun playing the sport they love.

CLUB VISION



★ To produce technically excellent and innovative players, with exceptional decision making skills

★ Train, develop, qualify and directly support more innovative coaches who are excellent teachers of the game



FAIR PLAY + OPPORTUNITY + RESPECT + TEAMWORK + ENJOYMENT + DEVELOPMENT

90% of young footballers play better with positive encouragement



OUR AMBITIOUS FUTURE PLANS

People at our club are constantly thinking of ways to improve what we do for our teams, players and local communities. We have ambitious plans for our club and will work tirelessly to achieve even more than previously thought possible as we continue to add fresh ideas, new people and new services. Examples of what we are developing are;

- ★ **Disability Football** ~ in partnership with local area schools and Beds FA we are developing plans so we can offer disabled children and children with learning difficulties the opportunity to play football in a safe environment
- ★ **Futsal Academy** ~ after a successful trial in 2019 which saw one of our brand new futsal teams participate in The FA Pokémon Futsal League eventually reaching the regional finals we will be making LUFC Futsal even bigger and better
- ★ **Female Football** ~ we will continue our commitment to developing the female game by supporting the introduction of more dedicated teams and doing direct promotional work in local schools to encourage more female players
- ★ **Football Events** ~ to promote grassroots football in the local area, we will be organising and hosting more social and tournament events in collaboration with our league partners as well as attending more community focused events
- ★ **Adult Football** ~ We have been pioneering innovative partner models with other local (in and out of county) clubs to share resources, coaches, and experience to provide our players structured pathways from youth into open age senior football





LEIGHTON UNITED FOOTBALL CLUB

105 Stanbridge Road
Tilsworth Village
Leighton Buzzard
Bedfordshire
LU7 9PL

01525 211 792

leightonunitedfc@gmail.com 

www.leightonunitedfc.co.uk 

LeightonUnitedFC 

@LeightonUtd 