



355 Reading Road, Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire, RG9 4HA

www.afchenley.com

AFC Henley Report for the Annual Town Meeting on 7 April 2016

AFC Henley, an FA Charter Standard football club, was founded in 1974 as Henley Boys & Girls Football Club and currently has 20 teams from U9-U18 in the East Berks Football Alliance league (300+ players), making us one of the largest clubs in the league in terms of the number of teams fielded. A further 100 boys and girls are registered for our various coaching modules. We therefore provide football for around 400 children with the help of some 50 volunteers. We have leases on, and manage, Jubilee Park's grass pitches and Harpsden football ground, and use the pitches at the YMCA and Henley Town Football Club for matches. In the last 18 months we have started an online kit shop, refurbished the football pavilion at Harpsden and introduced additional midweek coaching modules.

Membership

To attract new members, we run a Saturday Mini-Soccer Centre at Jubilee Park for ages 4-8, currently managed by Reading FC Academy's Recruitment Coordinator and a team of paid coaches. Launched in September 2002, it has continued to operate for 40 Saturday mornings every year since. Currently, over 100 boys and girls are registered, of whom between 60 and 90 turn up each week for coaching. Alongside it we operate a Junior Soccer Centre to enable those members who are unable to play in a league team to benefit from professional coaching in lieu of matches. The Mini-Soccer Centre feeds three teams into the league every year and is almost entirely responsible for the quadrupling of the club's membership over the last 14 seasons. In the absence of girls-only teams we have feeder arrangements with AFC Caversham and Wargrave Girls FC for those who do not wish to play in mixed teams. We also run three after-school clubs, several midweek Player Development Centres, which are aimed at selected players who might benefit from more advanced coaching, and school holiday camps. Our league teams meet for training during the week on the artificial pitch at Jubilee Park.

Coaching/safeguarding

As a condition of our charter we must have at least one FA-qualified coach assigned to each team, while anyone responsible for supervising children must have an in-date Criminal Records Check (CRC). We comply fully with these conditions. Several of our volunteer coaches have FA L2. Our Mini-Soccer Centre Head Coach, Shelley Strange, has a UEFA 'B' Licence (FA L3), is an FA coach mentor and scouts for the national women's team. Our other most senior coach, Andy McIntosh, has gained his UEFA 'A' Licence (FA L4), a major achievement for a grass-roots club.

Funding

We are grateful for the funding we receive from Henley Town Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, the Football Foundation, Invesco Perpetual, Stuart Turner and Courtiers, and occasional financial support from the Henley Standard, Oxfordshire FA, the Henley Educational Trust and local charities. We also benefit hugely from the generosity of local kit sponsor, Jamie Butler,





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owner of Fix Auto, who is committed to a 10-year programme with the club. These external sources of funding enable us to buy playing strips, tracksuits, goals and pitch maintenance machinery, including, this year, our own ride-on mower. Financial support has also enabled us to carry out major refurbishment of the pavilion at our Harpsden ground at a cost of £51,000, funded by the Football Foundation, SODC, The John Hodges Trust for Harpsden Hall, Henley Town Council, Invesco Perpetual and Henley Lions.

Twinning

For many years we have been a corporate member of Henley-Leichlingen Twinning Association. Every October we host a visiting U13 boys team from SC Leichlingen (Germany), while our U13s take part in SC Leichlingen's annual Easter Tournament. This year AFC Henley won the tournament for only the second time in the club's history.

FA Charter and Partnership working

We are an FA Charter Standard Club in our own right and a founding member of the Henley Football Partnership, comprising AFCH, Henley Town Football Club and Henley YMCA. By working together, we are able to provide complete footballing opportunities for some 500 children and adults, including those with learning difficulties. As a 'virtual' club, the Partnership also qualifies as an FA Charter Standard Community Club, the highest charter status available, and was voted Oxfordshire FA's Charter Community Club of the Year in 2009 and 2012. A coordinated Partnership Facilities Development Plan for the next few years includes:

- A new AFC Henley pavilion on Jubilee Park, following demolition of our current clubhouse site as part of Henley's Neighbourhood Plan.
- An artificial grass 3G surface to replace the grass pitch at Henley Town's Triangle Ground, to be shared with AFC Henley and the community.
- Improvements to the Partnership's pitches with financial support from the FA.
- A new stand at Henley Town's Triangle Ground, with financial support from Henley Town Council.

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