# Slimbridge Football Club



## Uhlsport Hellenic Football League Premier Division

Saturday December 21st 2024
v Fairford Town

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# Slimbridge
## Football Club

| | |
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| | |
|---|---|
| **First Team Manager** | Tom Deakin |
| **Assistant** | Will Hawes |
| **Coach** | Sam Prior |
| **Sports Therapists** | Tony Woodward<br>Nathan Hartfield |
| **Kitman** | Dave Bees |
| **U18 Manager** | Kieran Brice-Ingles |
| **Assistants** | Ben Jaggers<br>Tom Read |
| **Ground Staff** | Barry Gay<br>Malcolm Lineaker |

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Gloucestershire
GL2 7AF

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# Slimbridge v Fairford Town

## Todays Team Lineups

Ben Hands
Callum Dark
Charlie Hitchings
Gavin Jones (GK)
Hadyn Evans
Jacob Rogers
Joe Hunt
Joel Jagger
Jonty Welch
Josh Barclay
Josiah McKayle
Liam Harper
Luca Kapadia
Nathan Dennis
Rhys Sarson
Sam Blackie
Sergio Mills
Theo Clayson
Toby Soule
Travis Wood (GK)
Will Hawes
William Djaha-Nsangou

Ben Lodge
Ben Mitchell (GK)
Cameron Thomson
Charlie Holliday
Charlie McCrae
Danny Way
Ellis McSharry
Harrison Edwards
Harrison Ellis (GK)
Henry Birkett
Jamal Lawrence
Joe Shutt
Leighton Blacker
Luke Hitchman
Tom Chamberlain
Tristan Haswell
Will Davidson

| | |
|---|---|
| **Referee** | Samuel Wilmot |
| **Assistants** | Jakub Kobrzynski<br>Jason Cuthbert |

# Slimbridge
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# Season 2024-25
## Fixtures

| Date | Time | Fixture | H/A | Opponent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sat 21 Dec 24 | 15:00 | League | H | Fairford Town |
| Thu 26 Dec 24 | 15:00 | League | A | Lydney Town |
| Sat 28 Dec 24 | 15:00 | League | A | Malmesbury Victoria |
| Wed 01 Jan 25 | 15:00 | League | H | Highworth Town |
| Sat 04 Jan 25 | 15:00 | League | H | Cirencester Town |
| Sat 11 Jan 25 | 15:00 | League | A | Corsham Town |
| Sat 18 Jan 25 | 15:00 | League | H | Westfields |
| Sat 25 Jan 25 | 15:00 | League | A | Sporting Club Inkberrow |
| Sat 01 Feb 25 | 15:00 | League | H | Hereford Pegasus |
| Sat 08 Feb 25 | 15:00 | League | A | Pershore Town |
| Sat 22 Feb 25 | 15:00 | League | A | Worcester Raiders |
| Sat 01 Mar 25 | 15:00 | League | H | Brimscombe & Thrupp |

# Season 2024-25
## Results

| Date | Match | H/A | Opposition | Result | Att |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Tue 30 Jul 24 | League | H | Pershore | 3-3 | 196 |
| Sat 03 Aug 24 | FA Cup Extra Prelim | H | Malmesbury Victoria | 3-1 | 136 |
| Tue 06 Aug 24 | League | A | Tuffley Rovers | 0-3 | 210 |
| Sat 10 Aug 24 | League | H | Hartpury University | 1-0 | 90 |
| Tue 13 Aug 24 | League | A | Westfields | 2-1 | 179 |
| Sat 17 Aug 24 | FA Cup Prelim | A | Wallingford & Crowmarsh | 0-3 | 140 |
| Tue 20 Aug 24 | League | H | Sporting Club Inkberrow | 2-4 | 142 |
| Mon 26 Aug 24 | League | H | Lydney Town | 10-1 | 153 |
| Mon 02 Sept 24 | League | A | Hereford Pegasus | 1-4 | 207 |
| Sat 07 Sept 24 | League | H | Mangotsfield United | 1-3 | 131 |
| Sat 14 Sept 24 | League | H | Roman Glass | 2-4 | 114 |
| Wed 18 Sept 24 | League | A | Longlevens | 3-1 | 197 |
| Sat 21 Sept 24 | FA Vase 2Q | A | Devizes Town | 1-2 | 89 |
| Tue 24 Sept 24 | League | H | Worcester Raiders | 3-3 | 127 |
| Sat 28 Sept 24 | League | A | Thornbury Town | 3-2 | 130 |
| Sat 05 Oct 24 | League | H | Royal Wootton Bassett Town | 3-6 | 102 |
| Sat 12 Oct 24 | League | A | Fairford Town | 1-1 | 80 |
| Sat 19 Oct 24 | League | H | Malmesbury Victoria | 3-1 | 95 |
| Sat 26 Oct 2024 | League | A | Highworth Town | 0-5 | 147 |
| Sat 02 Nov 2024 | League | A | Cirencester Town | 2-0 | 154 |
| Sat 09 Nov 2024 | League | H | Corsham Town | 5-2 | 141 |
| Tue 12 Nov 2024 | GFA Trophy | H | Lydney Town | 4-0 | 85 |
| Sat 16 Nov 2024 | League | A | Brimscombe & Thrupp | 2-2 | 121 |
| Sat 23 Nov 2024 | League | A | Mangotsfield United | 0-2 | 367 |
| Sat 30 Nov 2024 | League | A | Roman Glass | 1-5 | 110 |
| Fri 06 Dec 2024 | League | H | Longlevens | 2-3 | 109 |
| Tue 10 Dec 2024 | GFA Trophy | H | Longlevens | 5-1 | 95 |
| Sat 14 Dec 2024 | League | A | Royal Wootton Bassett Town | 2-2 | 111 |

# Uhlsport Hellenic League

## Premier Division - League Table

| Pos | | Pl | W | D | L | F | A | GD | Pts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Hartpury University | 23 | 17 | 4 | 2 | 54 | 12 | 42 | 55 |
| 2 | Roman Glass St George | 21 | 14 | 4 | 3 | 60 | 28 | 32 | 46 |
| 3 | Mangotsfield United | 23 | 13 | 7 | 3 | 41 | 14 | 27 | 46 |
| 4 | Sporting Club Inkberrow | 23 | 13 | 6 | 4 | 41 | 21 | 20 | 45 |
| 5 | Highworth Town | 24 | 13 | 4 | 7 | 43 | 32 | 11 | 43 |
| 6 | Royal Wootton Bassett Town | 23 | 13 | 2 | 8 | 54 | 35 | 19 | 41 |
| 7 | Fairford Town | 22 | 11 | 6 | 5 | 42 | 29 | 13 | 39 |
| 8 | Worcester Raiders | 24 | 8 | 12 | 4 | 37 | 25 | 12 | 36 |
| 9 | Corsham Town | 23 | 11 | 3 | 9 | 41 | 42 | -1 | 36 |
| 10 | Tuffley Rovers | 25 | 10 | 5 | 10 | 35 | 36 | -1 | 35 |
| 11 | Westfields | 23 | 9 | 6 | 8 | 46 | 26 | 20 | 33 |
| 12 | Slimbridge | 24 | 9 | 5 | 10 | 54 | 59 | -5 | 32 |
| 13 | Pershore Town | 22 | 9 | 4 | 9 | 50 | 35 | 15 | 31 |
| 14 | Hereford Pegasus | 24 | 8 | 3 | 13 | 37 | 39 | -2 | 27 |
| 15 | Cirencester Town | 25 | 6 | 4 | 15 | 27 | 52 | -25 | 22 |
| 16 | Longlevens AFC | 24 | 5 | 5 | 14 | 27 | 51 | -24 | 20 |
| 17 | Thornbury Town | 21 | 5 | 3 | 13 | 30 | 41 | -11 | 18 |
| 18 | Brimscombe & Thrupp | 24 | 3 | 4 | 17 | 24 | 85 | -61 | 13 |
| 19 | Lydney Town | 20 | 2 | 3 | 15 | 20 | 67 | -47 | 9 |
| 20 | Malmesbury Victoria | 16 | 2 | 2 | 12 | 19 | 53 | -34 | 8 |

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# Fairford Town
## Club History

Fairford Town Football Club was formed in 1891 and for many years played in the Cirencester & District League against local teams with varying degrees of success.

After the second world war the club joined the Swindon & District League, winning the Premier Division in both 1964/65 and 1968/69, also winning the Advertiser Cup in the same years, and in 1962/63 won the Gloucestershire Junior Cup.

Success in the Swindon & District League was followed by election to the Hellenic League in 1970, only missing promotion from the first division on goal average at the first attempt, the club were also beaten finalists in that year's division one Challenge Cup.

The following year, 1971/72 saw Fairford win the Hellenic first division and division one Challenge Shield, whilst the reserve side won the Gloucestershire County Minor Cup, the Advertiser Cup and finished runners-up in the Swindon & District Division One.

The successful run continued and Town were the beaten finalists of 1972/73 in the Premier Division Cup, only to be relegated back to Division One in 1973/74.

Fairford Town were again promoted in 1975/76 and steady progress led to the Premier Division Runners-up in 1978/79 and 1979/80, also winning the Premier Division Cup in 1978/79.

The Club were winners of the Gloucestershire Challenge Trophy in 1979/80 and 1998/99 and Runners-up in 1982/83 and 1994/95.

The most recent league success has been Premier Division Runners-up in season 1994/95 following a similar position in Season 1990/91. The Club has also achieved numerous wins in the Arthur Shipway Cup and Fairford Hospital Cup.

The 2016/17 season saw the club secure a return to the Uhlsport Hellenic Premier Division after a five-year absence, winning the Division One West title with 75 points.

In recent years the club has grown on and off the pitch. The first team are now established and challenging in the Uhlsport Hellenic Premier Division with a Reserves side also competing in Hellenic Division 2 South. 2020 also saw the creation of Fairford Town Academy with teams running from under 12s through to under 18s. We aim to place the football club within the heart of the local community and are keen to continue to grow and achieve our goal of promotion to the Southern Football League for the first time in the club's history.

The 2023/24 saw the first team just fall away in the final weeks of the season to finish eighth whilst the reserves tasted success in winning Hellenic Division 2 West for the first time. The club also saw an under 18 side competing in the FA Youth Cup for the first time in our history and finishing 6th in their inaugural season in the South West Counties League.

# Fairford Town

## Player Profiles

**Jamie Reid** – 36 years old. Became manager of Fairford in May 2022 following 4 years as assistant to Jody Bevan. As a player Jamie was a no-nonsense midfielder where he was a regular for many years at Gloucester City, Cirencester Town and Mangotsfield Utd. A succession of knee injuries forced a premature end to his playing days.

**Sam Farr** – Assistant Manager. Possibly the nicest man in football. Sam made his name as a player primarily with the Cirencester Town Development before moving to Fairford in 2019 initially as a player and then as manager of the reserve team. Promoted to assistant manager following Jamie Reid's appointment in 2022.

**Lee Randall** – Coach. Rands has now been with the club for 7 years having previously been with Gloucester City and Redditch. Very popular member of staff who seems to know somebody everywhere he goes!

**Rich Cox** – Coach. This is Coxy's third season at the club. His day job is at Cheltenham Town and he brings that professional attitude to his coaching at Fairford.

**Olly Begley** – Sports Therapist. Since joining the club Olly has become a fantastic asset to the club. The best

**Ben Mitchell** – Goalkeeper – 32 years old. Ben is the club's longest serving player having been with the club for excess of 10 years. A top-class goalkeeper who improves year on year.

**Harrison Ellis** – Goalkeeper – Returns to the club this year following a couple of years away. Another top goalkeeper that we are lucky to have on our books.

**Cameron Thomson** – Defender – At just 20 years of age, Cam joined the club in late 2022 from Bradford Town and quickly impressed with his defensive attributes and played well beyond his years. Awarded Young Player of the Year for 2022/23

**Tristan Haswell –** 27-year-old full back who has previously played for Gloucester City, Tuffley Rovers, Bishops Cleeve and Cinderford Town. Tris was an ever-present last season and is an integral part of the squad.

**Luke Hitchman –** Centre Back who has joined the club during the summer from Longlevens. A strong and commanding defender who has always impressed in his displays against us.

**Will Davidson –** 24-year-old centre back who has joined the club last season following spells at Highworth Town and Royal Wootton Bassett. Will has quickly impressed with his strength and athleticism at the heart of the defence.

**Ellis McSharry** – Defender – 24-year-old tough tackling midfielder in his second season at the club having joined from Chipping Sodbury

**Henry Birkett** – Midfielder – Another new signing for the 2024/25 season. Henry joins us from Tuffley Rovers where he often wore the captain's armband.

**Harrison Edwards** – Midfielder – Another returning for the 2024/25 season having plied his trade previously with Highworth Town. A box-to-box midfielder with the ability to run with the ball and have an eye for goal.

**Danny Way –** Last season's player of the year. 29 years old signing from Bourton Rovers for the 2023/24 season. A midfielder of some pedigree having previously represented Dorchester Ton and Weymouth.

**Tom Chamberlain –** An incredibly talented midfielder who at just 22 years old has the potential to play several levels higher. Was on the books of Cheltenham Town for over 10 years and made his debut in the first team at 17.

**Jamal Lawrence** – Striker – Jamal joined Fairford in 2022 having previously been on the books of Cheltenham Town, Oxford City, Hungerford Town, Gloucester City and Worcester City. Now captain, Jamal notched 25 goals from 42 appearances last season.

**Joe Shutt** – Shutty notched 14 goals last season and impresses everybody not just with his skill but also his work rate. Joined the club in 2023 from Slimbridge.

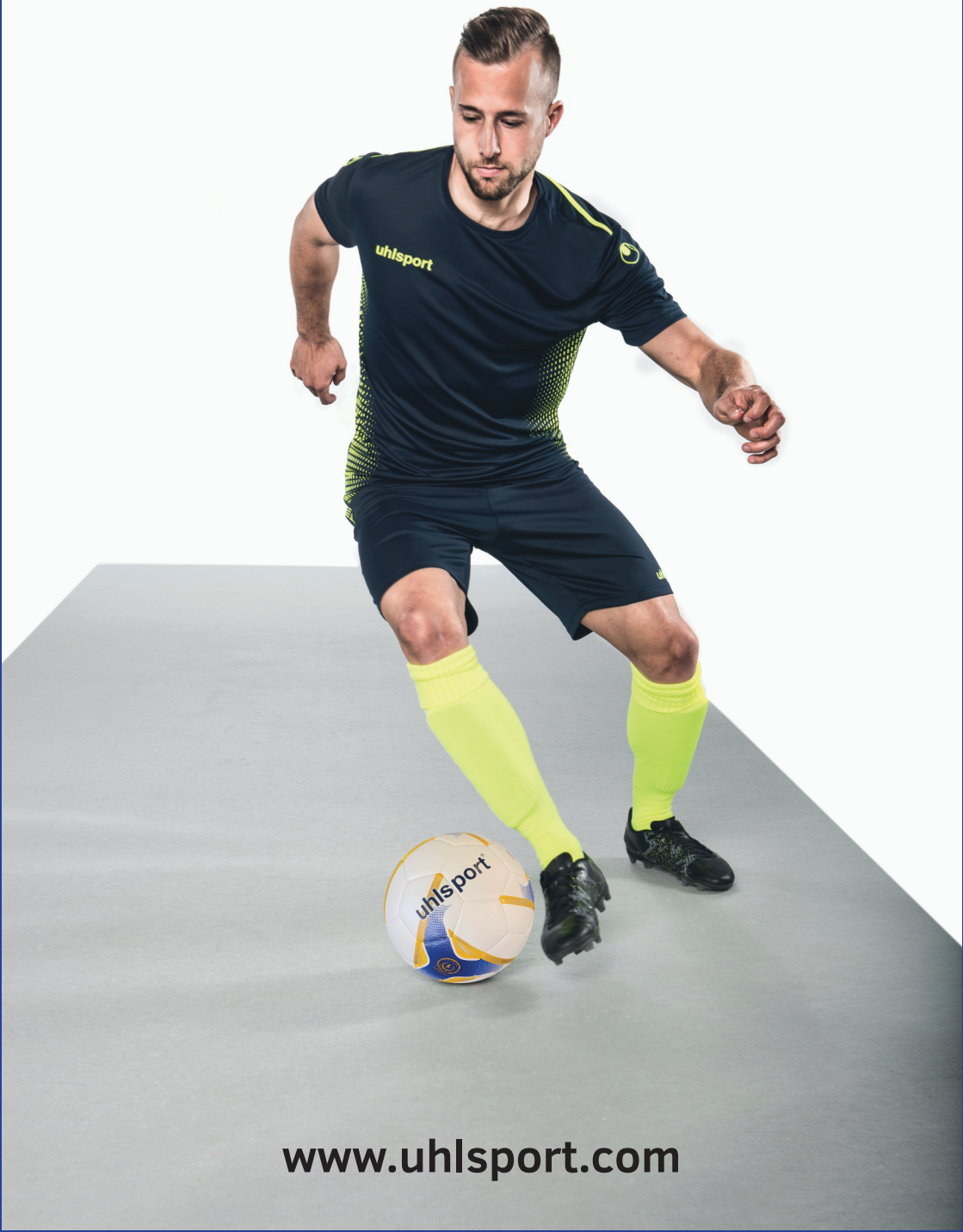
**Ben Lodge –** Lodgey is real fans favourite when on form with his trickery and quick feet. Has previously paid for Highworth Town and Wantage Town

**Charlie McCrae –** Charlie has joined the club permanently this year having spent part of last season with us on loan from Cirencester Town

**Leighton Blacker –** Powerful forward who was awarded young player of the year last season in our title winning reserve side. Burst on to the first team scene with a memorable late equalizer at Worcester City last season.

**Charlie Holliday –** New signing Charlie joins us after finishing University and returning to Gloucestershire. Charlie represented Step 4 side Anstey Nomads last season.

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# Slimbridge
## Player Profiles

**Travis Wood**
*Goalkeeper*
Strong shot stopper, vocal leader at the back. Signed from Malmesbury Victoria.

**Gavin Jones**
*Goalkeeper*

**Nathan Dennis**
*Defender*
Big old school style defender who like to put himself about at both ends of the pitch. Now in his third season with the club.

**Charlie Hitchings**
*Defender*
Made a huge impact last year, has bags of experience at Southern and Western League levels. This season's vice-captain will again be leading the team from the heart of the defence.

**Hadyn Evans**
*Defender*
Hadyn is entering his debut season for the swans. He has impressed pre season with his tenacity. He has previously played for Dursley Town first team, and come up through the academy at Forest Green Rovers.

**Jacob Rodgers**
*Defender*
Played for Tredworth Tigers Jacob has come back to the club after a spell with Tredworth. He previously had 2 successful seasons with the Swans U18s

**Joe Hunt**
*Defender*
Former Cheltenham Town youth player who likes getting forward down the flanks signed from Malvern Town, also played for Evesham United and Worcester City.

**Ben Deakin**
*Defender*
Solid full back who adds experience to the back line in his second spell with the club after many years at Brimscombe and Thrupp.

**Joshua Barclay**
*Defender*
Strong young defender that has made his presence felt in the Under 18s team this season and looking to gain experiance with the first team squad.

**William Djaha-Nsangou**
*Defender*
One of a number of Under 18 players pushing to get into the first team. Emposing centre half with a promising future.

**Sam Blackie**
*Midfield*
In his second season with the Swans after a brief spell in 2015. . Sam is a skilful midfielder who is effective at both ends of the pitch with past experience at Hellenic and Southern League level having played at Bishops Cleeve, and local neighbours Brimscome and Thrupp.

**Toby Soule**
*Midfield*
Previously played for Bishops Cleeve & Hartpury FC. Toby is entering his first season with the club and is looking forward to a positive season with the Swans.

**Jonty Welch**
*Midfield*
Joined this Summer after 5 seasons at Brimscombe and Thrupp. Prior to that, had 4 seasons at Longlevens.

**Liam Harper**
*Midfield*
First season back, had two seasons with the U18s as captain and two years with the reserves and 1st team. Previous clubs: Frampton United and Brimscombe and Thrupp

**Ben Hands**
*Midfield*
A strong lad at the heart of the defence also plays in a defensive midfield role and capable of chipping in a few goals returning for his third season with the Swans. Previous clubs include Longlevens and Cinderford Town.

**Joel Jagger**
*Midfield*
Promising young midfielder from the Under 18 squad looking to break through into senior football.

**Sergio Mills**
*Midfield*

**Will Hawes**
*Striker / Assistant Manager*
Will has a very good eye for goal and is a very skilful player in his sixth season at Thornhill Park and is destined continue to score plenty more this season. Off the field Will is also the clubs Welfare Officer and Commercial Manager.

**Callum Dark**
*Striker*
Callum joins Slimbridge for the 24/25 campaign having previously played for Lydney Town last season scoring against us 3 times. His other former clubs include Bristol Rovers, Chepstow Town and Pershore Town

**Theo Clayson**
*Striker*
Another product of the U18s team. Made really good progress in his first full season of senior football scoring some important goals for the club.

**Rhys Sarson**
*Striker*
Returns to the club from Roman Glass. Strong centre forward.

**Josiah McKayle**
*Striker*
Pacey young striker signed on dual registration from Frome Town

**Kieran Bennett**
*Striker*
Another one of the bright talents from the under 18s team that is looking to step into first team football.

**Luca Kapadia**
*Striker*
Joined from Bristol University, having previously played at Luton Town.

# Slimbridge
## Staff Profiles

**Tom Deakin**
*Manager*
Deaks is entering his 5th year at the club having progressed from being a coach to now joint manager. The aim being to put smiles on faces at the club and bring Southern league football back to Thornhill Park. He arrived from Forest Green Rovers after 2 years with the academy and 14 years in total having also coached at Brimscombe and Thrupp working with both the first team and development sides.

**Sam Prior**
*Coach*

**Tony Woodward**
*Sports Therapist*
Tony has been with us for very many years and is a popular figure in the dugout. Keeps threatening to retire but keeps turning up, Tony is also a qualified football referee.

**Nathan Hartfield**
*Physio*
Nath is entering his 3rd season with the club and is great amongst the dressing room. He's destined to become a physio at Liverpool

**Dave Bees**
*Kit Man*


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# Slimbridge
# Club History

**In The Beginning**
The Gloucestershire village of Slimbridge is world renowned for its Bird Sanctuary, but much hard work has gone into making Slimbridge better known in football circles.

The Club's history can be traced back to the 1899/1900 season, when the team were playing in local football at various venues in and around the village. A gap in the records suggests there may have been a couple of seasons when no games were played, and thus, officially, the Club's centenary was celebrated in 2002/03.

For the next forty-odd years the Club were predominantly members of the Stroud and District League with varying degrees of success and failure, except for a period between 1960 and 1968 when they were in the Gloucester Northern Senior League.
It was not until 1951 that the current ground at Wisloe Road (Now renamed as Thornhill Park) became the club's home, and it subsequently became the legal property of the club after former player, and ex-Chairman of the club, Evi Thornhill, bequeathed the land to the Club in his Will, with the Club becoming legal owners in 1960. It was to prove an incredibly valuable treasure in future years.

**Point Of Collapse**
By 1988, the club had fallen on hard times, but fortunately, a handful of committee members led by Gordon King and Gordon Tudor kept the Club afloat. The following season local businessman Paul Chappell arrived. The Club was stabilised and construction of new changing facilities, to County League standard, were completed. Paul Chappell was to remain a vital part of the club until his retirement from his duties in 2020.

**Start Of A New Reign**
As playing standards improved, 2000 saw the completion of the building of a long awaited Social Club in an area of the ground that in it's old life had housed a cowshed. John Mack, a successful local entrepreneur, joined the club as Chairman, and he remains a committed supporter of the club to this day as Club President. In the summer of 2001, Doug Gray was appointed Manager, and the club began a period of upward momentum.

The team achieved a Runners-up spot in their first season in the Gloucester County League, and were accepted into the Hellenic League. Hellenic Division One West was won by an eleven point margin in 2002/03. A creditable fourth place finish was achieved in the Hellenic Premier League in 2003/04. In a marvellous season the club also claimed the Hellenic 'Norman Matthews' Floodlit Cup and the G.F.A. Challenge Trophy.

## Arrival Of Floodlights

Floodlights arrived at the ground in the summer of 2003. A pre-season visit from Conference side Forest Green Rovers on 22nd July, produced a then ground record attendance of 427 to witness the inaugural game under lights at Wisloe Road.

A few weeks later on Sunday 24th August, that ground attendance record was beaten at a Bank Holiday Hellenic Premier Division fixture that was part of the 2003/04 annual 'Ground Hop' weekend. Local rivals Shortwood United provided the opposition in front of a crowd of 525.

Season 2004/05 again saw a fourth place finish in the Hellenic Premier. The club also made their first appearance in the F.A. Vase, which resulted in a run to the third round proper before a 2-1 extra time defeat at Western League side Backwell United.

In February 2005, Gray stood down after nearly four seasons at the helm of the club.

The club started season 2005/06 under newly appointed Manager Doug Foxwell. A first entry into the F.A. Cup saw a visit from Wessex League side Wimborne Town. A 1-0 defeat did not dampen the sense of occasion on the first day of the season. A second successful run in the F.A. Vase came to an end in the Third Round Proper, with a 3-1 defeat at South Midland Premier, Welwyn Garden City.
After a record-breaking 64 game season, the team achieved a fifth place finish in the Hellenic Premier, and the club also won the Hellenic 'Norman Matthews' Floodlit Cup and the GFA Challenge Trophy, both for the second time in three seasons.

## Reserves Make Headway

The Club's Reserve side were also making progress - After two successive third place finishes in the Stroud and District League First Division, season 2005/06 saw them finally win the title and with it, promotion to the Gloucester Northern Senior League Division Two. This was the same League title that the first team won in season 1998/99 which proved the springboard for five successive first team promotions.

## Rise To New Heights

Season 2006/07 proved to be the most successful in the Club's history to date, with both the First Team and Reserve side recording League and Cup doubles, with the added bonus of record-breaking F.A.Cup and Vase runs for the senior side.

In the F.A. Cup, a five match run from the Extra-Preliminary Round finished at Merthyr Tydfil in the Third Qualifying Round. Along the way there were memorable wins against two other

Southern Premier sides, 2-1 at Yate Town and 3-1 at home to Chippenham Town.

It was six matches in the F.A. Vase before defeat was tasted, the run ending in the Fifth Round Proper at home to the eventual winners, Truro City.

In the Hellenic Premier Division, bad weather, which led to a record number of postponements during the subsequently extended season, led to half a seasons fixtures being played in the final two months. A tremendous effort saw the Club bring the Championship Shield to Wisloe Road, the winning margin being three points over second placed North Leigh.

There was a rousing performance in the G.F.A. Trophy Final against Almondsbury Town. A 3-1 victory not only retained the Trophy, but recorded a third success in four seasons in that competition.

The Reserve side had an early success in the Gloucester Northern Senior League Cup with a 2-0 win against Division One Tuffley Rovers. This saw confidence rise and they went on to break a Gloucestershire Northern Senior League record in winning Division Two with a Played 30, Won 30 record.

**Promotion To The Southern League**

As a result of winning the league after an inspiring final day victory, and the upgrade to the ground facilities at Wisloe Road, the club were promoted into the BGB Southern League Division One Midlands for Season 2007/08, however, there was a twist to come in the tale.

**Return To A New Beginning**

On July 10th 2007 the club decided not to take up the promotion, and effectively, the first team took over the position in the pyramid occupied by the reserve team, which was disbanded.

The First Team reverted back to the Gloucester Northern Senior League. This meant a severe upheaval in the club both on and off the field with the manager Doug Foxwell and several senior players moving on the pastures new.

However, a loyal band of players stayed on including James Cole, who over as player manager with assistance from long term club captain Leon Sterling to begin the next stage of the club's journey.

**Climb Back Up The Ladder**

Four promotions followed as the club regained their previous status. James Cole handed over to Leon Sterling, who moved into the Manager's role, with Leon joined as Assistant Manager by long time Slimbridge stalwart Freddy Ward. The two guided the side to three top six finishes in their first three seasons back in the Hellenic Premier.

## Switching Leagues

After the completion of the 2012-13 season, the Swans applied for a transfer to the Toolstation Western Premier League in an effort to reduce prohibitive travelling costs, a move which was approved by the FA in the Summer of 2013.

## Return To The Southern League

After two seasons in the Toolstation Western Premier League, a third place finish at the end of the 2014/15 season gave the Swans a second opportunity to return to the Southern Football League. This time the club accepted the offer and took their place in the South and West Division, finishing a credible 18th in their first season, the highest level the club had ever achieved at that time in their history. Prior to the commencement of that campaign, John Mack had stepped back from Chairman duties and his position was taken up by Barry Gay.

## Welcome To Thornhill Park

At the start of the 2016-17 season, and prior to our pre-season friendly fixture with neighbours Forest Green Rovers, the football ground in Wisloe Road was formally renamed to Thornhill Park in recognition of the marvellous gift we received from Evil Thornhill 46 years earlier.

Evi's son, Tony and his late wife Margaret were on hand to cut the ceremonial ribbon, and Tony made a short heartfelt speech about how much the renaming meant to him and the entire Thornhill family, and how honoured they were that the football club had recognised their father in this way.

## Onwards and Upwards

A difficult two seasons of struggle at a higher level saw the eventual departure of Leon Sterling as Manager, with Freddy Ward stepping up to the plate, assisted by local footballing legend Lee Driver-Dickerson. With Freddy then stepping aside to concentrate on his last few years of playing having steadied the Swans' ship, 'Drive' took over the reins as Manager of the first team.

The Club's previous ground attendance record was smashed on 4th February 2017, when 898 fans saw the side suffer a 3-0 defeat to Hereford FC, who were working their way back up the league pyramid following their reformation after the collapse of Hereford United

Prior to the Covid suspension of football in March 2020, the Under 18s and the Reserves were top of their respective leagues, while the first team were sitting in 12th place in the Southern League Division One South, the highest placing in the history of the football club. Although the FA has made the season's results null and void, they have been officially added to club statistics and all appearances and goals will stand in our records as

a permanent tribute to all who represented the club in a fantastic season in the strangest of all campaigns.

The 2021-22 Season saw the departure of Driver-Dickerson, who decided to accept an opportunity to move to Evesham United, and the assistant team of former Swans' legend Tom Speers and Adam Coyle took over the reins, assisted by Tom Deakin and Tom Hitchens.

**Return to the Hellenic League**

The 2022-23 season was a very difficult one for the side resulting in the departure of Speers in February 2023 with the side having achieved only four victories at that point. Adam Coyle and Tom Deakin moved into the Management role, but the season resulted in relegation and a return to the Hellenic League for the 2023-24 Season.

On a brighter note, the Under 18s side had a historic Double winning season, winning the S.Tuier and Son Cup, beating Bishops Cleeve at Evesham United's ground, before clinching the Cheltenham Floodlit league title and the double on a memorable night a few days later at Tuffley Rovers.



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