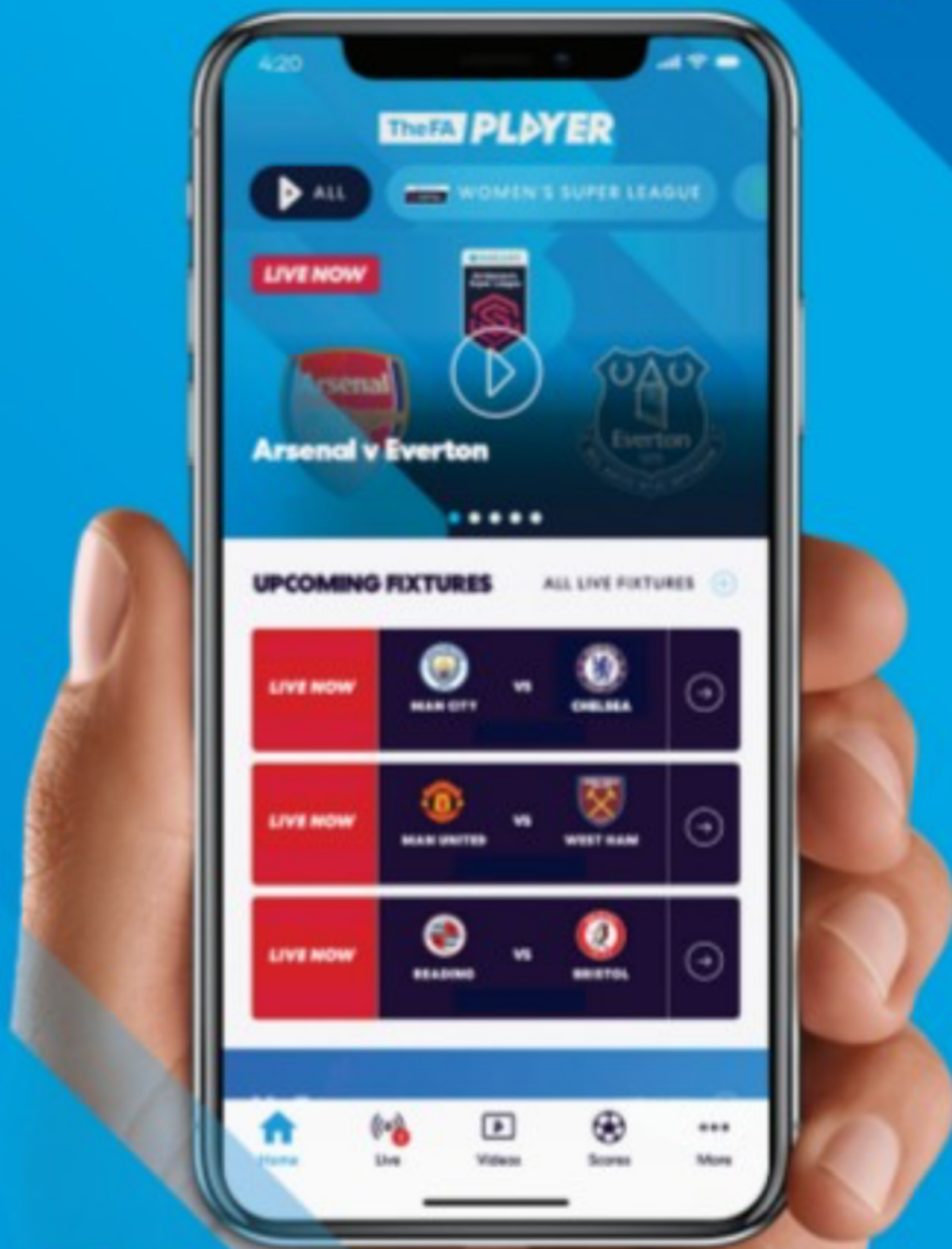


BALDOCK TOWN FC



BALDOCK TOWN FC v ARLESEY TOWN FC
SAT 30TH MAR 2024, KO - 3:00 PM
SSML PREMIER DIV
SEASON 2023-2024 : VOL 16 ISS 17



**EVERY GOAL
EVERY CELEBRATION
EVERY MOMENT
EVERY TEAM**

FREE

FOLLOW THE ACTION LIVE ON

TheFA PLAYER

www.faplayer.tv



ARLESEY TOWN FC - A BRIEF HISTORY

Arlesey Town Football Club celebrated their centenary in 1991, having been formed by a group of local people before the turn of the last century. Before the Second World War, Soccer was played on a localised basis, and in common with many clubs in the area, Arlesey competed in the flourishing Biggleswade & District League and entered the Biggleswade Knock-out Cup.

During the 1920's, the club joined the Bedfordshire County League - which was later to become the South Midlands League. Arlesey originally played at 'The Bury' before moving to their former home, 'Lamb Meadow.' The ground took its name from 'The Lamb,' a former Public House situated near the site which, for many years acted as the club's headquarters and changing rooms. The birth of the modern era is owed to the foresight of officials of the late 1940's and early 1950's. They purchased the premises and became landlords for the princely sum of just £500 in 1948. Four years later, in 1952, an adjoining area was bought and this is where the clubhouse used to stand. The story goes that two

Committee members missed their train to Kings Cross and with time to kill, saw a notice in a local Estate Agent's window for a forthcoming auction of the land. They returned the following week and purchased the said land for the clubhouse. The area lay unused for a number of years until the arrival of 'Biggs Wall' who negotiated with the club to build temporary offices and canteen facilities - which the Football Club then bought back, turning them into what was then, the clubhouse. The first competitive match under floodlights was played in January 1981 against the now defunct 'Pirton FC' and two months later the Blues played host to Luton Town for the official opening in front of over 1,000 spectators.

Playing fortunes have fluctuated since the war and season 1950-51 saw the Blues finish as runners-up to Bletchley Town in the S.M.L. Premier Division. The following season the 1st XI lifted the championship crown and the second string were crowned S.M.L. Division Two champions with the Youth team winning three trophies. The 1952-53 season began North Beds Charity Cup final win over Biggleswade Town (the match was held over from the previous season), and ended with a second successive championship win, Arlesey amassing S.M.L. record 52 points.

In February 1954, the developing Arlesey Town Colts, local players, reached the 4th round of the F.A. Youth Cup and were drawn away to Portsmouth. The 1950's had seen the Blues compete in the South Midlands and Parthenon Leagues. Season 1968-69 saw one of Arlesey's favourite sons in charge of team affairs; Roland Legate, (who played football professionally for Luton Town) took the helm as player-manager and during his four-year spell, he took the Blues to a league runners-up spot. The start of the 1975-76 season saw Legate return as manager and the trophies came with him, 3 Hinchingsbrooke Cup successes, one Beds Senior Cup, the Biggleswade K.O Cup twice and the South Midlands League Challenge Trophy once. Supporting the Executive Committee's wish to cross the pyramid to the United Counties League. With two indifferent terms in the U.C.L., Arlesey lifted the Premier Division crown in season 1984-85.

During the late 1980's the Blues won the United Counties League, Premier Division Cup and a Beds Premier Cup final appearance against Luton Town. During the 1991 centenary year in the blues lifted the South Midlands Floodlight Cup with a fine victory over fellow U.C.L. side Irthlingborough Diamonds, who went on to become Rushden & Diamonds in the football league.

With the rising cost of UCL travel and the attraction of more 'local derbies' in 1991-92 it was decided to resign from the United Counties League and cross to the familiar surroundings of the South Midlands League. A successful first year campaign saw the Blues finish in third place and in their second season finished sixth in the league and lifted the Premier Division Cup. The club also gained national recognition following a marvellous run in the FA Vase to the quarterfinals, with victories Flackwell Heath 2-0, Ware 1-0, Haverhill Rovers 2-1, Eastwood Hanley 2-1, Falmouth Town 5-3, and Oadby Town 2-1. In the quarterfinal the blues faced old U.C.L. foes Boston in a thrilling game and lost out to an injury time winner.

With changes to support and playing staff for 1994/5 the results exceeded expectations. The South Midlands League championship was won with a record 107 points, but even this memorable feat was eclipsed when Arlesey Town defeated Oxford City at Wembley Stadium in front of over 13,000 spectators to lift the F.A. Carlsberg Challenge Vase on May 13, 1995.

On their way to the greatest day in the club's history, the Blues had beaten Hoddesdon 2-0, a vengeful 2-1 victory at Boston, a 2-0 win at Barnstaple, a 1-0 home win over the holders Diss Town and a 3-0 quarter-final demolition of Cammel Laird before facing U.C.L. side Raunds Town in a two-legged semi-final. The first leg, played at Raunds, saw Arlesey beaten out of sight by a score of 3-0 and very few pundits gave them much chance of overturning the deficit in the return match the following week at Lamb Meadow. Three nil at 90 minutes and 5-0 after extra-time, including a penalty save by Arlesey 'keeper Steve Young meant that the Blues were off to grace the most hallowed of turf! Arlesey Town's Wembley side that day were:- S. Young, N. Cardines, G. Bambrick, P. Palma, C. Hull, P. Gonsalves, S. Gyalog, G. Cox, N. Kane, R. O'Keefe and G. Marshall. Subs: A. Ward & T. Nicholls.

The Vase travelled home to Bedfordshire for the first time.

In 1995/5 season saw the Blues crash out of the Vase at the first hurdle but the South Midlands League Championship Crown was retained. The season culminated in three Cup finals for the club; the 1st XI were runners-up to Ely City in the Hinchingsbrooke Cup, the Under 16 Youth side were beaten East Anglian Youth Cup finalists while Peter Milton's Reserve side lifted the S.M.L. Reserve Challenge Trophy. After finishing in third place the 1996/7 campaign ended with the Blues relinquishing the S.M.L. title. However the Lamb Meadow trophy cabinet remained in a healthy position as they lifted the Beds Senior Cup (the first time since 1979) and also lifted the Hinchingsbrooke Cup (last won in 1982). May 1997 saw Robbie O'Keefe tender his resignation, moving on to a higher grade of football with Baldock Town. In just three seasons Arlesey Town had achieved national recognition with F.A. Vase success and two league championships, a County Senior Cup victory and a Hinchingsbrooke Cup triumph.

For season 1997-98 team were unable to keep pace and their championship aspirations soon evaporated. An FA Vase 3rd round exit occurred in Cornwall's Porthleven in December and the Blues' last chance of picking up any silverware disappeared at the hands of arch rivals Stotfold who loosened Arlesey's grip on the Hinchingsbrooke Cup with a 2-0 semi-final victory. After a lengthy campaign the club finally received planning permission for a new ground just a few hundred yards along Hitchin Road. After a development project the club moved in on April 30th, 1999 and are now able to boast some of the finest facilities in the area with a purpose built Members Bar, multi-purpose Function & Conference Suite, all-seater stand and training pitch.

During the 1998/99 close season, Arlesey Town appointed Gary Pilsworth as manager however, things didn't work out and after 16 matches with the club rooted at the bottom of the league table, the management team replaced him with Nicky Ironton who had gained a wealth of experience having been at QPR, Barnet, Maidstone, Enfield, Barking and Baldock Town. Nicky was a former England semi-professional international. Nicky brought as his assistant former team-mate Billy Harrigan and together with Russell Ball, their objective was to avoid relegation and build a side capable of attaining promotion to the Ryman Isthmian League the following season. The Blues ended the season without silverware however, but a fantastic run from the end of January signalled the club's intents. Manager Nicky Ironton had built a side more than capable of attaining Arlesey's aim of playing a higher grade of football and the Blues looked forward to season 1999-2000 with optimism.

The first season at the new Hitchin Road ground began with nine straight Spartan South Midlands League Premier Division victories as Ironton's men stormed to the top of the table. A mid season blip in form threatened the side's hard work but having secured the services of coach Alan Dawson, the Blues went from strength to strength and went on to lift their fifth South Midlands League Championship. A run in of eight consecutive victories culminated in a 2-0 triumph at Milton Keynes City on Thursday 4th May meant the Blues secured the championship. With their ground grading 'Arlesey Town were promoted to the Ryman Isthmian League Division Three. The sale of Dave Kitson to Nationwide Football League Club Cambridge United halfway through the season, did little to upset their cause indeed, the signing of ex Stevenage Boro' striker Neil Trebble boosted their season. A prolific striker, Trebble netted an amazing 18 goals from 17 starts and one wonders just how many he would have scored had he been with the Blues at the start of the season.

A magnificent first season in the Ryman League, saw the club lose just two league matches (one at home and one away) as they raced away to win the Third Division Championship scoring an Isthmian League record of 138 goals and the Blues also gained the record of being the first club to attain a 100 + goal difference in the league's 96 year history.

During 2002 season Chairman Bryan Ellis fulfilled his promise to elevate the club to another level following a successful application to the 'Football Stadia Improvement Fund.' A six-figure grant enabled the club to meet the league's ground-grading criteria that gave the Blues a new covered stand for 600 spectators, a new open terrace and two new turnstiles. On the pitch, Arlesey boss Nicky Ironton led his side to the last 16 of the FA Carlsberg Vase, secured a highly creditable final Division Two fourth place and lifted the Beds Premier Cup for the first time since 1984.

The 2002/2003 season was a consolidation for the rapid successes of the previous years and the highlight was an extended run in the FA Cup winning 4 away matches in reaching the fourth qualifying round. The reward was yet another away fixture, this time at Nationwide Conference club, Hereford United. Arlesey Town represented the Ryman League Division One north and after going behind to a sixth minute 'soft' goal, they more than matched their opponents in all departments, even having a goal disallowed. It was such a gallant performance that at the end of the tie, the relieved Hereford fans gave their guests a standing ovation. At the end of the 2002/3 Arlesey's Hitchin Road ground hosted two UEFA Ladies qualifying fixtures including England versus Spain. It was seen as a just reward for all the hard work that had been done at the Club by many of its members in recent years.

Season 2003/2004 saw Arlesey Town yet again in the national limelight following a fantastic run to the last 16 of the FA Trophy defeating on the way, both after away draws 'Hayes FC' from the Ryman Premier Division and 'Dagenham & Redbridge FC' from the Nationwide Conference league. This resulted in an away game with 'Exeter City FC' who had just been relegated from the football league. Although losing the game the blues gained respect with an outstanding performance. The season ended with Arlesey Town failing to gain promotion to the new premier structure on goal difference but small consolation was gained when the Blues lifted the 'Bedfordshire Senior Cup' after defeating fellow Ryman League club outfit Leighton Town at Hitchin Road in May.

In season (2004/05) Arlesey Town played in the Southern League Division One East and after the successful six-year reign of Nick Ironton it was a consolidation period. Because of the club's success, visibility and recognition most of the players moved to play in the 'Conference League' and premier league. After an indifferent start to the season Nicky Ironton decided to hand over the manager's position to Jon Taylor, whom he had dealings with in the past. Jon imported a new team of players during November with the single objective of maintaining the club's status within the Southern League Division 1. This was achieved with a mid-table position and during that close season Jon added more players with a wealth of football league and senior club experience.

The season (2005/06) Arlesey Town again played in the Southern League Division One East with Jon Taylor and Scot Houghton in charge. With an exciting start 9 wins out of 10 culminating in destroying Boreham Wood's unbeaten run 3 – 0 at their home fortress. In both the FA Cup and Trophy there were unfortunate fixtures at Premier Clubs, Heybridge Swifts (1 – 0) and Leyton (90th minute goal) ending our cup interests. Arlesey Town had a mixture of excellent and mediocre results and achieved a mid-table position.

The 2006/2007 seasons saw Arlesey Town reverting to the Ryman Isthmian Football league along with many of last season's opponents also being reassigned. Again during the close season Jon Taylor had added players with a wealth of football league and senior club experience for the next season's campaign we were looking to climb the non-league structure.

Darren Hay took on the team management during the early stages of 2006/2007 season, when Jon left for personal reasons, with Mike Brooks as the assistant manager and coach and they put together a very young and eager team for the coming 2007 campaign. This included both experienced senior players supporting by young players who broke into the first team towards then end of the previous season. During the season there were several disruptions and there were three chairmen and three managers in succession which disrupted the development of the team because of the club management changes. Arlesey Town finished in the bottom half of the Ryman league with Matt Corbould as the manager and a very young side.

Season 2008/2009 saw Arlesey Town reverting to the BGB Southern League with the consequence of substantial extra travelling miles and additional costs. Because of the league restructure Matt had to put together a totally different team comprising of a number of young players.

As a result of Arlesey Town successful cup runs there were three players who were playing professional football for the 2008 season with Dave Kitson, was is a main A.T.F.C. sponsor, and who moved from Reading to newly promoted Stoke City to remain in the Premiership, Craig Machail-Smith and Shane Blackett were with newly promoted Peterborough United. This is a record to be proud of for a small club like Arlesey.

Season 2008/2009 saw Arlesey Town escape relegation by the skin of their teeth. No honours were forthcoming in the season. But the Club were hoping season 2009/2010 would be more fruitful, which it so proved.

With a complete new management structure in place and a new Management team, of: Gary King Director of Football, Lee Cowley Manager, Zema Abbey Assistant Manager, and Darren Staniforth as Coach, Arlesey played the season with renewed style and passion, finishing the season in 9th place in the League and getting through to the first round proper of the F.A. Trophy and lifting the Beds Senior Cup in the last game of the season.

Season 2010-11 saw them staying in the Zamaretto Southern League in the new "Central Division" and saw them looking forward with a lot more hope and even more optimism, with the whole team showing great experience and growing in strength and confidence on and off the field all of the time.

The season in which Arlesey were in the top echelons all season finished in dramatic stile as they won 10 games on the bounce, had 9 points deducted on the day they thought they had won the league away at Hayes and then beat long term arch rivals and near neighbours Hitchin Town on Hitchin's own ground on their last game of the season to be finally crowned League Champions.

This was followed soon after by beating Biggleswade Town to retain the Beds Senior Cup at Luton Towns Kenilworth Road ground to give Arlesey a League and Cup Double and see them promoted to the new Evo-Stick Southern League Premier Division, a truly tremendous season.

The season was topped of in early August of this year as Arlesey beat neighbours Luton Town in the Beds Premier Cup to make a quite unique "treble" for the side.

The first season in the Premier League was seen as a settling in period targeting staying up and a good cup run, both of these ambitions were achieved with the club reaching the F.A. Cup 1st round proper for the first time in their history.

The second season again saw a good FA Cup run that went again to the 1st round proper before it ended at the Ricoh Stadium against Coventry City. The season finished on a knife edge as Arlesey missed out on the play off spot of the Premier Div by just a single point. Although promotion was narrowly missed the Red Insure League Cup was won in a 2 legged final v Frome to bring home yet another impressive piece of Silverware.

The squad like all good squads was rebuilt again through the summer and we looked forward to another successful season.

But as the Abbeyes left to take up management elsewhere we had a change of Management and in November 2013 Rufus Brevett arrived to take the club forward. Although his 1st season was "steady" a very difficult season in 2014-15 saw several changes of management as results failed to materialise a Rufus gave way after Christmas to ex manager Nick Ironton but again this failed to halt the slide and he in turn gave way during the season as Zema Abbey came back with brother Nathan as joint managers, Although this led to an improvement in playing style but they were unable to prevent relegation in the end back to the Central Division. The new season saw us struggle to get to grips with the style of the new division and early form showed us propping up the division but a second half resurgence saw us push up the division to finish in a mid-table position. Last season saw us with most of last season's players returning to try to prove their point that they somewhat under achieved in the previous season.

Season 2017-18 proved a very difficult year with a season plagued by injuries and problems and indeed a terrible record of no league wins at home all season saw us unfortunately get relegated from the Southern league.

This now presents a new challenge in the South Midlands league for this year and to that end a new management team of Matt Endersby and James Hatch were appointed during the close season and they have rebuilt the team and gathered together a whole new coaching staff. We look forward to the new season with a degree of confidence that was perhaps missing in the previous season.

The new League started well with a good start although a cup run eluded us and things went reasonably well until the Christmas period when a series of injuries knocked results but things were slowly rebuilt leaving us an 8th place finish that left a feeling of under achievement that led again to a rebuild.

A change in management as Matt Endersby left the club at the beginning of October the club appointed Chico Ramos in November to try to push the club forward again. His reign has been blighted by the Covid pandemic with two uncompleted seasons although some progress seems to be happening on the pitch. Also off the pitch much change is happening with a complete refurbishment of the clubhouse and dressing rooms. Also a change off the pitch saw ex player Dave Kitson come back to the club he started at as Chairman.

Although progress was made a further change in management came in December 2021 as Martin Standen was appointed to take charge of the team.

Martin left the club after a short tenure and skipper Adam Randall took the reins until the end of the season. With the new season the club appointed Nick Brown as manager and he has started to evolve his new team.

After a season of rebuilding for the 23/24 season the club looks to push forward with new youth teams added to the club and Nick Brown building a strong looking squad the future looks more stable.



Introducing our new **ONLINE TECHNOLOGY** shop, selling:

- ✓ Laptops
- ✓ Desktops
- ✓ iPads
- ✓ TV's
- ✓ Servers
- ✓ Professional Displays

Call us on: 01245 474987
Email: sales@gradeatechnology.co.uk
www.gradeatechnology.co.uk

GRADE A
TECHNOLOGY

BALDOCK TOWN FC

Abraham Ajiboye
David Archer
Malaki Black
Jamie Breen
Kit Brown
Newman Carney
Ellis Coker
George Devine
Mamadou Diallo
Harry Dollimore
Flavins Drescanu
Fraser Findlay
Sonny Gardner
George Kingham
Albert McGregor
Archie O'Brien
James O'Connor
Dominik Robertson
Owen Robertson
Marley Rochester Stein
Max Ryan
Harry Watson

Mgr; Dave McAdam
Asst; Matt Coker
Sports Therapist; Amy Kibler

ARLESEY TOWN FC

Ollie Skinner
Tom Millett
Matt Gilbert
Tommy Cooney
Yasin Boodhoo
Dan Wappett
Eddie Carrington
Alex Taylor
Josh Helmore
Noah Mosanya
Montel Brown
Larry Abolarin
Cam O'Neil
Brandon Beaman
Ezinna Odimgbe
Demo Oladiran

Mgr; Tommy Cooney
Asst Mgr: Zac Guerfi
Physio; Pebbles Folorunso

Officials; Matthew Rendell, Chris Meehan, Ian Huckle

macron store

/Hertfordshire



TEAMWEAR SPECIALISTS

*Great value sports and workwear
outlet based in Letchworth, Herts.*

CONTACT US

Macron Store Hertfordshire,
Unit 1, Arden Press Way, Letchworth,
Herts, SG6 1LH.

Email: sales@macronstorehertfordshire.co.uk

 /macronhertfordshire

 @macronherts

www.MACRONSTOREHERTFORDSHIRE.co.uk

TEAMWEAR

TRAINING KITS

WORKWEAR

ACCESSORIES

SHOP ONLINE

VIA THE WEBSITE