

The Talk of the Town

Volume #17, Saturday 7th December



**Tickets: £6 Adults, £3 Concessions, £1 Under 16s
vs Biggleswade United
Bell Close, LU7 1RX
Spartan South Midlands Premier Division**



People at the Club

First Team Managers: Joe Sweeney and Paul Copson.

Physio Team: John Rutherford and Lorraine Smith.

Chairman: Alan Penman

Vice Chairman: Steve Harris

Director of Football: Sean Downey

Secretary: Roy Parker

Treasurer: Steve Harris

Match Photos: Andrew Parker

Media: Kieran Carvell

Hall Hire: Pauline Parker

Groundsman: Bruce Warner



A word from the Press Box

Ladies and Gentlemen, good afternoon and welcome to Bell Close for today's SSML Premier Division clash between ourselves and Biggleswade United. A very warm welcome to our visitors, who have made the journey from the other side of Bedfordshire.

A rare Tuesday off for us this week, after games every Tuesday for the last 3 and a half months!

However, how about last Saturday? A whopping crowd of 426, the 2nd highest attendance in all Vase games last weekend (just 3 shy off of number 1), saw us beat one of the favourites, Eastbourne Town, 2-1.

Archie McClelland's last minute winner sending supporters all around the ground crazy!

It really was a brilliant game of football, evenly contested, with a brilliant atmosphere. Thank you to everyone for their support, we'd love to see you all again throughout December, before our first game of the new decade away to Eynesbury in the Vase. They are our Fourth Round opponents, after Monday's live draw at Wembley. An all SSML tie, a team we played just a couple of weeks ago and drew 2-2 in the league.

I personally, cannot wait for it, it promises to be a special occasion as we continue on the road to Wembley!

Saturday, was also a special occasion, one that filled everyone at the club with pride, to see our boys keep fighting till the dying embers, especially with injury problems running rife through the squad. Luckily, no Extra-Time was needed to be played...

Today, we welcome Biggleswade United, a team we lost to 2-1 earlier in the season in the league at Second Meadow. That was our last league defeat. Let's hopefully keep the run going today! Enjoy the game.

History

Leighton Town, who were known as Leighton United between 1922 and 1963, were formed in 1885. They were mainly involved in local leagues until the outbreak of the Great War, and were winners of the Leighton and District League on several occasions.

Leighton were one of the original members of the South Midland League in 1922 – which at the time was known as the Bedfordshire County League. They were also members of the Spartan League between 1922/23 and 1951/52, but their only successes being the Spartan League Division 2 title in 1923/24 and 1927/28. They were Bedfordshire Senior Cup winners in 1926/27.

In 1952, they became a founder member of the Hellenic League, but after two disappointing seasons, moved to the South Midlands League. In 1965/66 season however, the Premier Championship sat in the Leighton Town Boardroom. The club then rejoined the Spartan League in 1967/68.

Leighton proceeded to consolidate their League success by winning the Bedfordshire Senior Cup for three successive seasons in 1968, 1969 and 1970. Unfortunately, some of the successful players moved onto other clubs, and Leighton's fortunes again declined. A move to the United Counties League proved disastrous and, after just two seasons, the club rejoined the South Midlands League. During the '70's and '80's, Leighton were unable to capture the success of the '60's.

In 1990/1991 the First Team won the South Midlands League Challenge Trophy and the O'Brien's Premier Division Cup, both for the first time. The 1991/2 season was one of the club's best ever. The South Midlands Premier Division title, which had eluded the club for so long, was won, and with it a place in the Isthmian League.

1992/3 saw the Club's success continue when they won the Bedfordshire Senior Cup for the first time since 1970. The Club missed out on promotion in their first Isthmian League season by just a single point but the Youth Team retained the County Cup.

1995/6 saw the First Team win promotion to Division 2 of the Isthmian League, whilst at the same time retaining the Buckingham Charity Cup.

In the 1996/7 season, Leighton won the Isthmian League Associated Members Trophy for the first time. 1998/99 saw the return of the Associated Members Trophy and the Buckingham Charity Cup.

Season 2003/04 was arguably one of the Club's best ever, as the First Team won the Ryman Isthmian Second Division title. The team was also named Ryman Division Two Team of the Year, and Paul Burgess was awarded Manager of the Year. They also reached the Fifth round of the FA Vase, and the final of the Beds Senior Cup, before losing to Andover and Arlesey respectively.

The 2004-05 season saw the club placed in The Southern League East Division and finished in a creditable tenth place. They also won the Buckinghamshire Charity Cup. The Reserves won the Bedfordshire Intermediate Cup and the U18's won the SCYFL League Shield, the first time in the club's history.

The 05-06 Season saw the Club progress again, improving on the year before, as they finished 8th in The Southern League West Division. After a poor start, League results improved and the side only suffered four defeats from the start of November until the end of March, a play-off place just eluding them.

After three excellent victories interest in the FA Trophy competition ended with a single goal defeat to eventual semi-finalists, Borehamwood.

The Club also reached the Beds Senior Cup Final, but sadly they again finished as Runners Up.

The Club were relocated to the Southern League, Midland Division for 06-07 season but only one League win in the first six games and early exits in the two FA Competitions cost Paul Burgess his job in September. He was replaced by former Wycombe, professional Keith Scott, results did improve but it was a disappointing season, although Town did win the Bucks Senior Charity Cup.

The 07-08 started brightly with the first League defeat not coming until mid-October. Three wins in the FA Cup saw the Club reach the 4th Qualifying Round for the first time in its history. A 3-0 defeat to Conference South, Havant and Waterlooville finally ended the run. Keith Scott left in December to join Windsor and Eton. In January 2008, Assistant Manager Sean Downey was appointed as First Team Manager and did a splendid job as the Club ended their League season in 9th place, winning the Bucks Charity Cup and reaching the final of the Beds Senior Cup once more.

The 08/09 Season the First Team finished 8th in the Southern League, Midland Division, achieving their highest points total to date at that level.

The 09/10 season saw Leighton once again finish in the top half of the table, when they finished in 9th place and they also lost the Bedfordshire Senior Cup Final to Southern League rivals, Arlesey Town after penalties.

History

Season 2010/2011, saw Town finish in 7th place in the League, gaining 69 points, their best performance since joining the Southern Football League.

The 2011/2012 a poor season saw Leighton finish in their lowest position for several years.

2012/13 was also very disappointing for the First Team as they finished in 20th place.

2015/2016. After 3 disappointing seasons Leighton finished the season in the bottom two of the Southern League Central Division and were relegated to the Spartan South Midlands League where they had last played in the 1991/92 season.

2016/2017 This was a disappointing season with the club struggling for much of the time after yet another Managerial Change. Things did pick up towards the end of the season and we eventually finished in 16th place.

2017/18 The club retained Scott Reynolds as Manager and finished 4th in the League and reached the Quarter Finals of the FA VASE. Gates improved and it was our best season for about 8 years, however Manager, Scott Reynolds resigned at the end of the season.

2018/2019 The Club appointed experienced coach Danny Nicholls as the new Manager, but he resigned at the start of October. The Club then appointed Joe Sweeney and Paul Copson as their Management Team and results improved but we were unable to reach the top third of the table..

2019 We are hoping to be competitive this season with several new signings but this is a very difficult Division and we are well aware of the quality of many of the teams.



AWAY DAY TO EYNESBURY!



THE BUILDBASE FA VASE FOURTH ROUND

EYNESBURY ROVERS **V** LEIGHTON TOWN

SATURDAY 11TH JANUARY, 3PM, HALL ROAD, PE19 2SF
Back #YourTownYourTeam on the Road!

**THE FOURTH ROUND...
WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT!
TELL YOUR FRIENDS...
IT'S YOUR TOWN, IT'S YOUR TEAM!**



VISITORS HISTORY

Biggleswade United Football Club was re-formed on the 16th July 1959. However, local history records indicate that there was a Biggleswade United side playing at Second Meadow as early as 1929. Our first season (1959/60) saw us competing in Division Three of the North Herts. League (NHL). After 10 successful years in the NHL the club made the step up to South Midlands League (SML) football. But towards the end of a 15-year association with the SML the club began to struggle and after three years of finishing in the bottom three of Division One we sought fresh fields. The club joined the Herts. Senior but club continued to find the going tough. In 1986 we elected to return to local League football, joining the Bedford and District Football League and began to build again. The appointment of Brian Swords as first team manager in 87/88 proved to be the turning point in the club's fortunes. During the next ten years the club achieved a tremendous amount of success on and off the football pitch. Our record of League and Cup honours speak for themselves but aligned to this a great deal of work went on behind the scenes to match the on-field success. The club now boasts one of the best clubhouse and ground facilities in the Mid-Bedfordshire area. The success of the club has also attracted many new players as well as commanding a great deal of loyalty from those players who helped the club progress from Division Three of the Bedford and District League to County Senior Club status in just 15 years. The 1995/96 season was the most successful in the club's history - winning five major honours; the Beds Intermediate County Cup, Bedford and District League Championship, League Cup Championship and as the League's representatives the club won the Beds. FA Centenary Cup. Having won every major Bedford League honour the club felt it was time to move on and made the decision to make the step up once again and returned to Division One of the SML. In an exceptionally successful first season we celebrated a Division One "double" by winning the Championship and the Division One Cup. We also retained the Beds. FA Intermediate County Cup, only the second club in the competition's history to achieve this feat. To crown our success the club were awarded the SML Special Achievement Trophy in July 1997. In the season 1997/98 we finally achieved Senior status. This was achieved not only through the endeavours of the players on the field but ultimately as a result of an extremely hard working committee. With the help of the Biggleswade Town Council a new stand was erected and perimeter fencing installed. And two seasons later the club erected floodlights and on the evening of 26th October 1999 we played our first-ever floodlit game at Second Meadow, Ryman League side Leighton Town were the visitors in the Bedfordshire Premier Cup. The next eleven years saw the first team led by Steve "Snowy" Wright and under his management the club continued to enjoy a very high level of League and Cup success ultimately achieving promotion to the Molten Spartan South Midlands League Premier Division and with it the opportunity to compete in the FA Cup. And under Snowy the club made three Beds FA Senior Challenge Cup final appearances, winning two of the three with victories over Stotfold (4-1) and Leighton Town (1-0) but missed out in 2006/07 going down 2-0 to Dunstable Town. Snowy's other cup successes came in the form of the Hunts Premeir Cup, North Beds Charity Cup, Hinchingsbrooke Cup, the SML Division One Cup and the SML Special Achievement Award once again. The end of the 2006 2007 saw Snowy step down as manager with his assistant, Nick Burton taking over the first team reins. January 5th 2009 saw the club embark on further ambitious ground improvements. With financial backing from Biggleswade Town Council, Mid Beds District Council and the Football Foundation we installed a 260-seater stand, fully enclosed the ground with a double turnstile entrance and players' secure walkway which raised the ground to Grade E status. After several years of stability in terms of first team managers the next six years saw a regular turnover of first team and reserve team managers with Nick Burton, Dave Elkin and Phil Childs all taking over the first team reins for a time. At the start of the 2013 2014 season we appointed Mick Reardon and Mark Royal as first team managers both of whom had enjoyed success as coaches at the higher levels of football. Their disciplined approach was quickly adhered to and responded to by the players and under their stewardship we achieved the highest Premier Division position in nine years and first silverware in seven years winning the North Beds Charity Cup for the first time in the club's history. In November 2014 the club took a further positive step to realise our ambitions with the appointment of Sky Sports Presenter and renowned author, Guillem Balague as Biggleswade United's Director of Football. Following Mick and Mark's decision to step down at the end 2014 2015, Guillem was quick to act and recruited a new Head Coach in Cristian Colas Beccera. Cristian was assisted by former professional player, Stuart Bimson, and under their guidance the team finished in eighth spot in the Premier Division in 2017 2018 - the highest position in the club's history. Having built a strong reputation for their outstanding coaching ability and playing philosophy Cristian and Stuart moved up to Step 3 level club, Staines Town, for the start of the 2018 2019 season. Guillem was again in search for a high quality coach and Jimmy Martin came highly recommended by his predecessor, Colas, who worked with Jimmy at Stevenage FC Academy. Jimmy was appointed Manager in May 2018 but he tendered his resignation in October 2018 having been offered a "hard to refuse" opportunity to take up a coaching role at Premier Division club Watford. Despite the setback the first team went on to record their highest ever League placing - a fourth spot in the Premier Division. The club start the 2019-2020 season with a completely overhauled squad and have brought in experienced coach Chris Devane. Chris will be assisted by Trishnan Patel and Spanish Conditioning Coach, Bernat Puig-Vall. The club has certainly come a long way in relatively few years but we could not have done it without the help of a very supportive Town and District Council who clearly understand the benefits of having a community based club in Biggleswade. Our success is also very much down to a very hard working committee who throughout the year - not just the football season - continue to volunteer their time and commitment to the club, to help it continue to thrive and be a source of enjoyment for our supporters and the Biggleswade community.



Away Fan Guide

Transport

Bell Close (LU7 1RX) is situated in the centre of Leighton Buzzard, opposite Morrisons.

There is a bus stop next to the entrance and the Train Station is a 15 minute walk away, where trains run frequently to London, Milton Keynes, Birmingham etc.

If you are coming to Bell Close by car, you can come through Town or down off the bypass (A4146) and down Grovebury Road. This will avoid a potential busy Town Centre, especially on a Saturday Afternoon.

Parking can be found at the ground, or further afield in a number of side streets.

Parking at the ground on a busy matchday will be limited.

Food and Drink

At the club, we have a brilliant tea bar that serves a massive range of hot and cold food items, including burgers, bacon, sausages, curry and more!

In the bar, we have light snacks, as well as a range of draught lagers and ciders.

We also have soft drinks as well as bottles of ale and beer.

In Town, there are a range of pubs, with The Sun being the pub the closest in proximity to Bell Close.

In Town there is a Wetherspoons, as well as fish and chip shops and restaurants.

Across the road, there is Morrisons who have a Deli Counter serving hot food.



Our Sponsors

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CHRISTMAS FUN!

YOU ARE INVITED TO

Leighton Town FC

Christmas Party

21st December

7pm - Midnight

M G SOUNDS DJ, DISCO

FREE ADMISSION



REPORT vs Eastbourne

With December on the horizon and the weather continuing to be colder than ever, Town welcomed Eastbourne Town to Bell Close, in the 3rd Round of the FA Vase. Eastbourne, who were 16/1 to win the Vase going into this game (Town at 66/1), were backed by great vocal support. As were Town, outnumbering the Eastbourne supporters behind the goal 3 or 4 times over. The game got underway and it was the visitors who created the early opportunities. They rattled the crossbar just 2 minutes in, after their striker could not convert from 6 yards out, with an open goal in front of him! The game looked to be a scrappy encounter, but it remained very competitive throughout. Archie McClelland almost had the ball in the net for Town after the Eastbourne keeper came out into no man's land, but he shot agonisingly wide from 40 yards out. Eastbourne continued to attack the Shed End, but couldn't take their chances. Dave Murphy was luckily on hand to clear spectacularly off of the line after a loose header struck the post and was set to go in! Neither team created many opportunities for the next 20 minutes, with most of the play happening in the middle third of the pitch. McClelland and Webb both had chances shortly before half-time, however they were saved and put wide respectively. Eastbourne had another massive chance to go in-front, but they headed wide just before the break! Kirkwood was called into action with a fine stop, as the referee blew his whistle for the interval. Both teams with chances, however, Eastbourne ultimately lived to rue them most. The second half got underway and the tempo continued. A fast, end-to-end, lively encounter between 2 very in-form teams! Captain, Jordon Fredericks, went close just after half-time but his shot was gobbled up by the keeper. Alfie Osborne entered the referee's book on 57 minutes for a foul outside of the area. Then, on 61 minutes, Town took the lead! Archie McClelland's dazzling run out on the left hand side, allowed him to work his way into the box. He cut inside, with the ball eventually finding the feet of Danny Webb and he arrowed his shot into the bottom corner, right in-front of the masses of Town supporters. The Shed End erupted and Town made it 1-0! 30 goals this season for Webb... With 30 minutes still to play, Town knew they would be up against it. Murphy and Resch continued to remain resolute, with both having exceptional games. Resch being named man of the match. Town made their first change of the afternoon when Anthony Leslie came on for Alfie Osborne. Time kept on ticking, but Eastbourne failed to create any clear cut chances like they did in the first half. However, Town were defending magnificently, winning everything in the air and dealing with a constant barrage of corners. Ashton Campbell was replaced by Alex Condon on 81 minutes. On 87 minutes though, disaster for Town. An in-swinging Eastbourne cross was met at the back post and just about bundled into the back of the net, to pull the visitors level. With not long to go and supporters wondering whether there would be extra-time or we would be going to a replay, magic happened. Simply magic, in the 93rd minute. Eastbourne had the ball in the own third out on the left. Ross Adams, who hadn't played for 2 months through injury but played the whole 90 minutes, charged down the ball and won it. He drove into the box and delivered a beautifully weighted low cross and on the end of that cross was Archie McClelland who poked the ball home and lifted the roof off of Bell Close! There were absolute scenes, as Town won the game right at the death with pretty much the last kick of the game! The feeling was incredible and as the referee blew his whistle for full time, a brilliant moment played out of players and management celebrating with the masses of Leighton lads behind the goal! Town progress through to the 4th Round of the Vase, the Last 32 stage. Stay tuned to see who we get in Monday's draw. Thank you for your unbelievable support on Saturday. A brilliant crowd of 406 saw us win it late on. An amazing number for the 3rd Round of the Vase! Commiserations to Eastbourne Town, a great club with great people and support and all the best for the rest of the season! Next up, we have a free Tuesday, but we host Biggleswade United in the league on Saturday! We hope to see you there and once again, thank you for your superb support! What a win, Up the Town!

THE TABLE

POS		P	W	D	L	GD	PTS
1	Tring Athletic	17	13	0	4	33	39
2	Colney Heath	15	13	0	2	26	39
3	Newport Pagnell Town	17	10	5	2	25	35
4	Biggleswade United	19	11	2	6	10	35
5	Harpenden Town	18	10	3	5	9	33
6	Oxhey Jets	17	8	5	4	2	29
7	Crawley Green	19	7	6	6	11	27
8	Eynesbury Rovers	16	7	5	4	11	26
9	Harefield United	16	8	2	6	8	26
10	Leverstock Green	18	8	2	8	-8	26
11	Leighton Town	16	7	2	7	8	23
12	Broadfields United	16	7	2	7	-15	23
13	Aylesbury Vale Dynamos	12	6	1	5	0	19
14	Edgware Town	18	6	1	11	-15	19
15	Wembley	15	4	5	6	-4	17
16	Potton United	18	4	5	9	-15	17
17	Arlesey Town	17	3	9	5	-2	15 *
18	Dunstable Town	16	4	3	9	-13	15
19	London Colney	18	3	3	12	-24	12
20	Baldock Town	16	2	3	11	-20	9
21	North Greenford United	16	1	2	13	-27	5





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Keith Powell RIP passed away on 29th November 2019, at 87 years of age. Keith's funeral will be held on 17th December at MK Crematorium at 10:45.

Keith 3rd from left in the back row was part of the squad who won the South Midlands Premier title in 1966-67 season.

FIXTURES

PREM	07/12/19	15:00	Leighton Town	Biggleswade United	LEIGHTON BUZZARD SPORTS ASSOCIATION LTD
PREM	14/12/19	15:00	Baldock Town	Leighton Town	ARLESEY TOWN FC
PREM	21/12/19	15:00	Leighton Town	Arlesey Town	LEIGHTON BUZZARD SPORTS ASSOCIATION LTD
PREM	28/12/19	15:00	Dunstable Town	Leighton Town	CREASEY PARK
PREM	11/01/20	15:00	Leighton Town	Baldock Town	LEIGHTON BUZZARD SPORTS ASSOCIATION LTD
PREM	14/01/20	19:45	Leighton Town	Tring Athletic	LEIGHTON BUZZARD SPORTS ASSOCIATION LTD
PREM	18/01/20	15:00	Leverstock Green	Leighton Town	LEVERSTOCK GREEN FOOTBALL CLUB



The Sports Roundup



The Sports Roundup for the Leighton

Buzzard area with Kieran Carvell

Mondays 8pm

**A Sports Roundup for the Local Area,
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The Tea Bar Menu

WE DO
OUTSIDE



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BACON BAP	£2.50
BURGER	£3.00
CHESBURGER	£3.50 £4.00
CHICKEN WRAP	£3.50
SAUSAGE ROLL	£1.50
PASTY- VARIOUS	£2.50
TEA / COFFEE	£1.00
HOT CHOCOLATE	£1.50
BOVRIL	£1.00
SPECIALS : CHICKEN CURRY + RICE	£5.00



TODAYS PASTIES
CHEESE + ONION
CHICKEN CURRY
CHICKEN + VEG

VICTORIA SPONGE £1.20
CHOCOLATE CAKE £1.50
SAUCE





Squads



1. Brad Kirkwood
2. Tom Bryant
3. Tom Silford
4. Dave Murphy
5. Carl Resch
6. Alfie Osborne
7. James Towell
8. Jordon Fredericks
9. Ashton Campbell
10. Danny Webb
11. Archie McClelland
12. Ben Pattie
13. Alex Condon
14. Kuda Butawo
15. Luke Pyman
16. Anthony Leslie
17. Michael Donkor
18. Ross Adams

1. Dylan Berry
2. Codi Spavins
3. Kai Ashley
4. Jaiden Irish
5. Charlie Briggs
6. James Smith
7. James Bishop
8. Enrique Amador
9. Lorrell Smith
10. Dave Parkinson
11. Alex Carbonnier
12. Charlie Clayton
13. Carl Chambers
14. Mahmut Caglar
15. Kieron Ignaboi
16. Milo Keane
17. Jack Thomas
18. Ryan Neufville

OFFICIALS

Referee: Charles Martland.

**Assistants: David Augros and Peter
Panayiotou.**

