



## AGM Minutes

17 September 2023

### **Attendees:**

Mark Kelly, Sam Jacobs, Andy Parker, Andy Cooper, Sarah Barnard, Craig Budge, Nick Butcher, Dae Ede

Apologies: Aaron Jacobs

### **Reflections of 2022/23 season and looking ahead – Mark Kelly**

#### AGM Chairman's update 2023

Welcome, thanks to everyone for coming.

Just to let you know the plan for the AGM evening:

- 1) First of all, I'm going to start with a summary of the season
- 2) Andy Cooper is then going to run through the financial position of the charity
- 3) Then we've got some formalities with the selection of the club committee for the season ahead

At the end we'll open up the floor for any questions you may have..

So without further ado I'd like to start with my reflections on the year we've had.

For me last season was an excellent year from the club and I'm pleased to be able to say we've made good progress against our aims to provide a brilliant development experience for all our members and everyone who comes to the club.

I am pleased to report that we retained our 3 star accreditation which is the highest level of England Football club accreditation. So we continue to be a 3 star accredited club and we have been able to continue to demonstrate to the FA that we have met their on-pitch and off-pitch criteria and are providing a safe, respectful and inclusive pathway and environment for our young people to enjoy their football experience.

This is a great opportunity for the club and I'm sure you've seen in that we are using the accreditation marks all our promotional materials to attract new players. I'd like to say thank you to Sam for all her work in completing the assessment criteria. We've been really open with the FA as part of the process and we are committed to setting up an adult team in some form, whether it's men's or women's football over the next 2 seasons and Sam has been looking at the opportunities to do this.

Also in order to maintain the accreditation it's really important we continue to have full boys and girls pathways. Our boys pathway is full but our girls pathway continues to need targeted interventions to build.



Alongside the accreditation we also maintained a good number of teams across the club with 39 affiliated league teams supporting 495 players. This level isn't a given and Craig and the team have to work hard to manage transitions for the teams as they move into larger sided football. Also last year was the first time we had an u8s girls team which is a key target in helping grow the girls pathway from the base. In addition we have supported a weekly walking football team, provided younger children with development sessions, outsourced summer camps and continued to provide access to private hirers which continues to add another income source for the club and to enable other members of our community to enjoy playing football.

So in terms of on the pitch success, last season we continued to have success across our teams and as you can see on the screen we won 3 leagues, had 3 league runner up positions, won 2 cups, had 2 further finalists, won countless tournaments – special shout out to the U12 girls who seemed to win a tournament every week over the summer. I'm also really pleased to say that 2 teams were awarded the higher sporting marks award in their league for positive behaviour. That should be a challenge for all the managers here to win the sporting marks trophy as regardless of ability, everyone can play the game in the right way. A notable mention to u18 boys south who have been able to not only win but do it in the right way by winning the fair play trophy as well..

So all these results are fantastic and brilliant for the club but regardless of where the teams finished in their leagues or cups I'd like to say thank you on behalf of the club for all the efforts of the managers and coaches who have given so much of their time to support the young people at the club to learn and develop and work towards meeting their potential. I know we all love good results and to win matches but our real marker of success is providing positive development opportunities and I heard and seen personally countless examples of our young players improving and growing and that's what were really here for.

One of my favourite new initiatives last year was our goal of the week compilation videos, this was a great way to share the successes of the teams and allow people to see the scale of the club first hand. I'd like to thank Grant and Rosie who helped pull the films together giving up their time voluntary to do so. Hopefully some of you have enjoyed seeing the videos and it's helped provide some extra motivation for our players. For me, one of the main aims from this is that by sharing the positive moments across the club it will provide a sense of togetherness and club spirit. It's really important that everyone here feels part of a club and we're not just a group of teams operating in isolation. That's always a challenge for grassroots football clubs and like us and it's something we need to continue to work on with various engagement activities.

Our coaching team have been fantastic last year and Craig has done a great job leading them. As part of our commitment to provide development opportunities we were able to support one of our coaches Marcus Brown to complete his UEFA B badge and we now have 5 UEFA B coaches provided dedicated training sessions on a weekly basis. This really does set us apart from other grassroots football clubs and we can be very proud of the service levels we continue to meet which are certainly at least as good, if not better, than some other more commercial operations that we know are out there.

Going forward I'm pleased to say Andy Parker has been accepted onto the next UEFA B cohort group and the club will look to support Andy with his course fees this year and hopefully we'll have at least 6 UEFA B coaches next season.

Investing in our coaching methods is crucial for us to maintain our advantage and I'm pleased to say we have invested in a VEO system so that we now have video analysis facilities that we can roll out across the club in a fair way to ensure everyone has the opportunity to benefit from it. Craig and his team will be working on plans to do this over the course of the season.

I'm also pleased to say that for next season we will be investing in our referees and have agreed to use part of the Mark Lindgren funding to support young referees to complete their referees badges. We are looking



at how we can improve the support we provide to young referees and are looking to add a new referees role to the committee to help coordinate this.

Our facilities at Harvesters are continuing to be developed and improved and I'd like to say thanks to Nick Butcher for all his hard work in that respect. Nick has been able to access grant funding to ensure the pitches are continually developed and we had a very positive pitch assessment earlier in the year which graded 3 of our pitches at the Advanced level which is a step up from the last review that set them as good. Nick has also been able to build a great reputation through his work at Harvesters and was invited last year to be part of the Herts FA pitch improvement programme. So congratulations to Nick that that.

We have also be looking longer term at the site and our options to invest. I'd like to say thank you to Andy Parker and his dad for their work reviewing the local plan and from what we can see there isn't any clear risk to the Harvesters site. Harvesters is noted in the plans and there is clear need to football facilities set out in the plan. As such we will be relooking at the feasibility of a 2nd Astro pitch and to what degree it is a realistic option or not. We'll update the members in due course on this.

We were also able to continue to run our special events and last season we successfully staged a March open event, a special girls specific open event, the WFL finals and of course our End of Season Party.

The girls open event in particular was very successful in securing new players and gaining interest.

In May we were able to successfully stage the WFL final days again, this is an important event for the club, not only for the financial revenue it generates but also the opportunity it provides for the club to showcase it's incredible facilities and ability to host grassroots football in such a fantastic setting.

We also hosted the local schools finals and I was fortunate to see and feel firsthand the tension and excitement that those finals bring. To all those who have the opportunity to participate in them will have gone away with life long memories and the club is proud to have played our part to support in creating those moments.

Finally in June, we hosted the End of Season party which our way or celebrating all the incredible efforts from everyone at the club. We handed out around 120 trophies and countless medals to all the children and to recognise their development. It was great to be joined again by Mark Woollett and Margaret Southgate and well as John Lindgren and his family, Mark and Margaret are two founding members and previous committee members who have put so much in to make the club what it is now over the years since it was founded in 1987.

All these events took considerable planning and organising and I'd like to thank all the members of the committee with their help, in particular:

Sam Jacobs, Nick Butcher, Sarah Barnard, Andy Parker and Craig along with all the mangers who provided great speeches to their players. It was a great day and really was an incredible team effort.

Unfortunately our winner of the Mark Woollett volunteer's award was unable to make the presentation day so I thought I'd use this opportunity to say congratulations to.... Richard Thornton, who was voted by the committee to receive the award. Richard has been with the club for a number of years coaching both his son and daughter's teams and now also helping out with the u10 girls teams as well and continuing managing the u18 girls. The club is highly grateful for the efforts Richard has put in over the years and in particular we were taken aback at the feedback he received from the opposition mangers who after years of highly competitive football matches against Richards teams were highly appreciative of how Richard had conducted himself in those games and ensured there were always carried out in the right spirit. So congratulations to Richard.



This season as a committee we looked closely at just how we can track success and thank you to the work of David Ede putting in place another Player Voice survey to track progress from the last one. I'm pleased to say we had really positive results against and most importantly for me, we maintained the feedback that 100% of our children felt safe playing football at Harvesters. That's our ultimate measure.

The positive results are down to all the work we do and I'd like to thank Craig Budge and Sarah Barnard for their work in ensuring we operate a safe environment for our players.

Harvesters is now really cementing its reputation as being a brilliant grassroots football club and we've seen this with more teams coming over this season from other clubs to have the opportunity to be part of our club and through this we've been able to maintain the number of teams we are running into next season.

Financially we're in a strong position and I'd like to thank Andy Cooper and Jo Holmes for all their work managing the finances. Andy Cooper has worked on improving the reporting of our numbers and ensuring the budget holders are clear on the budget allocations we have to work with. Andy will provide more details of the financials in his update coming up soon.

As a club our committee as met regularly to ensure our processes have been reviewed and are as good as they can be. Sam Jacobs has now completed a full first season as club secretary and has done an incredible job being responsive and supportive to everyone at the club. The club secretary role is central to everything we do, and going forward we have increased the scope of the role to include kit management as well as some safeguarding responsibilities to support Sarah.

Finally I'd like to say thank you to Nik Foreman who has continued to look for sponsorship deals. We have recently agreed an ongoing arrangement with Cemex who will provide aggregate to fix the car park regularly and also a cash donation each year which effectively covers our annual rental.

So to recap, again thank you for everyone who's played a role in make the season last year the success it was.

Going forward we will look to continue this work with key priorities being:

- 1) Continuing to stage positive engagement events for our members and to show case Harvesters FC excellent facilities and promote the community getting together.
- 2) Maintaining the positive development environment for all and making sure that we celebrate this through our social media channels
- 3) Growing the number of girls teams where we can

## **Financial Support**

Please be aware of the Mark Lindgren Trust bursary arrangement we have. We have a pot of money which we can use to provide bursaries to ensure people can have access to play football regardless of their financial position. Last season we were able to provide support to help 6 people with their subscriptions, so if you're aware of anyone who might be struggling due to a change in financial circumstances, please let the club know.

## **Finance Report – Andy Cooper**

### Aims for 2023-24 Season



- Produce accurate and timely quarterly reports to the Harvester's Committee.
- Develop a 3-year strategic plan to help continue to grow the club at a sustainable pace in line with the charitable objectives.
- Look to better maximize the value of our reserves by investing in deposit accounts.
- Produce a treasurer's report that can be shared with the wider stakeholders of the club to keep all informed of the club's financial position.
- Look to review controls and ensure correct governance over the management of the club along with the other trustees.

Full details of our financials can be found on the website [here](#).

Finally, in line with the requirements of the club constitution, we'd like to put forward 5 roles that are required to be appointed at the AGM to make up the club committee.

Chairman - Mark Kelly  
Vice Chairman - Andy Parker  
Club Secretary / Minutes Secretary - Samantha Jacobs  
Finance officer - (Treasurer) Andy Cooper  
Development advisor - David Ede

This was seconded and thirded by Richard Thornton and Luke Owers.  
The AGM concluded.

**Signed .....Samantha Jacobs.....**  
**Sam Jacobs, Club Secretary**

**Signed ...Mark Kelly.....**  
**Mark Kelly, Club Chairman**