**History of North Greenford United F.C.**

The club was founded in September 1944 by the late Mr A.M. Timpson as a youth team. The following season saw the foundation of the Ealing Youth League and in May 1946, the club were crowned as the league’s first champions. The following season saw the formation of a senior side and the club entered the Hanwell and District League. In 1947/48 the club entered the Harrow Wembley League and in 1954/55 became champions of the Senior Division. In 1974 County Honours were achieved after winning the Middlesex Intermediate Cup.

In 1982/83 the club won the Middlesex League and in May 1983 promotion was gained to the Spartan League. 1984 was a mixed year for the club with the death of the founder Alf Timpson tempered by the granting of Senior status by the Middlesex County Football Association. The club achieved promotion to the Premier Division of the Spartan League in 1988/89. The 1994/95 season saw the club resign from the Spartan League to rejoin the Premier Division of the Middlesex Football League.

The club was keen to regain Senior status and undertook a long-term project to achieve this. Ground improvements were made which included the installation of floodlights at Berkeley Fields, and in 2002 Senior Status was regained. The year 2002 was also memorable as the club were elected to the Combined Counties League to round off the achievements made by all concerned at the club.

In season 2003/04 the club were runners up in the Premier Challenge Cup losing 4-1 to AFC Wimbledon in front of a crowd of over 5,000 at Woking FC. In season 2004/05 the club finished runners up in the Premier League. Season 2005/06 saw North Greenford finish 13th in the Premier League and reach the semi-final of the League Cup. The following season 2006/07 saw the club go one round better in the League Cup but the team lost to Merstham 4-1 in the final.

With Steve Ringrose taking over the Manager’s job with days to go before the beginning of season 2008/09 no one thought that a second place in the Premier League was achievable, but that’s exactly what happened and North Greenford finished Runners-up to Bedfont Green. Season 2009/10 proved to be the most successful in the club’s history when the First Team became Combined Counties Champions earning promotion to the newly-formed Southern Football League Division One Central. The double was achieved when the club defeated Enfield Town in the club’s first ever Senior Cup Final, winning the MFA Charity Cup 1-0 at Hampton & Richmond’s ground in front of a large crowd.

Season 2010/11 proved another successful year for the club at all levels. Despite having a difficult first season at the higher level the team succeeded in retaining North Greenford’s status as a Step 4 club, eventually finishing 18th. The Reserves finished Runners-up in the Suburban Northern League to gain promotion to the Premier Division and the Under 18s took Runners-up spot in the Allied Counties Eastern Division. The Third Team – the ‘Socials’ – finished as Champions of the London Commercial League Division 2, and the Vets won the MCFA Veterans Cup.

Despite notable successes in both the FA and Red Insure Cup, the first half of season 2011/12 saw the club struggling in the league. Steve Ringrose was replaced by Neil Shipperley as First Team manager in December 2011. Shipps managed to successfully steer the side away from the threat of relegation, doubling the points tally in the second half of the season and coming within one point of achieving the club’s original 50 point target. Experiencing an even more difficult time during the first half of season 2012/13, Neil Shipperley was re-appointed for a second term replacing Jon-Barrie Bates as First Team Manager at the beginning of October.

However, despite a promising 1-1 draw at Godalming Town, results continued not to go our way and, having lost 14 league matches on the trot, we sat second from bottom on four points, our only consolation being that Woodford United had still failed to notch up a single point. We finally achieved a much needed win at Thatcham on a freezing cold day in mid-February, followed by an impressive 4-1 home victory against Chertsey Town. A draw at Northwood on Easter Monday heralded the start of what was to prove an incredible April turnaround. The countless postponements that had resulted from the atrocious weather conditions meant we still had another 11 league games to play – over a quarter of our total fixtures – in the final month of the season. An absolutely amazing end-of-season run saw the team amass a remarkable 22 points to take the club above Leighton and Chertsey Town to finish in nineteenth place, an achievement that hardly seemed possible at the end of March. We were hoping to continue where we left off at the start of the following season’s campaign but, after excellent runs in both cup competitions, we struggled in the league and narrowly escaped the drop after crucial wins against our two fellow relegation contenders, Chertsey and Ashford Town (Middx).

After Neil Shipperley resigned as First Team Manager midway through the 2013/14 season, along with Assistant Manager Matt Penfold, Reserve Team Manager Paul Palmer was appointed to the First Team post, supported by Don Bennett as Assistant Manager and Bren Briggs (Physio). The decision to retain their services for the forthcoming campaign was confirmed following a committee meeting held in early May 2014. However, following an indifferent start to the 2014/15 campaign it was agreed, in the best interests of the club, to part company with Paul. Don Bennett was initially asked to take over in a caretaking capacity and later was offered and accepted the permanent position. Results, however, did not go his way and in December 2014 Don tendered his resignation along with assistant Steve Scott and physio Bren Briggs. Reserve Manager Barry Morris took on the role in a caretaking capacity assisted by coaches George Bouhet and Fitzroy McLeod.

After an initial struggle, as Barry Morris and his management team re-built the first team squad virtually from scratch, the club saw another impressive end-of-season run that came close to matching that of the 2012/13 campaign. 21 points were amassed in the final 14 games with the club finishing on 35 points, 11 better than the previous year, four points clear of bottom club AFC Hayes and just five behind third from bottom Beaconsfield SYCOB, and the club were granted a reprieve by the FA. The run and ambitious plans of Barry and his team convinced a majority of the committee to re-appoint them on a permanent basis for the forthcoming campaign. However, on Saturday 19th September 2015 Barry tendered his resignation due to work commitments, and his assistant George Bouhet was offered and accepted the position of First Team Manager in an acting capacity.

Unfortunately, after poor results left the club firmly rooted at the bottom of the Central Division table, it was agreed to part company with George and his team at the beginning of November 2015. The committee appointed two ex-Greenford players – Ricky Pither and Danny Bennell – as joint First Team managers. Ricky and Danny were supported on the coaching front by Mark Chandler and another ex-Blue Chris Mills. Despite some promising performances, however, results did not improve. Four wins and six draws were not enough to secure the points needed to avoid the drop and, on this occasion, a strong end-of-season run could not be achieved and the team ended their campaign well adrift at the foot of the table. There was to be no chance of a reprieve with relegation a virtual certainty.

When this was confirmed we expected to be moved to either the Spartan South Midlands or Combined Counties League, It therefore came as a massive shock when the FA announced its decision to place the club in the Hellenic League. Given the serious implications of such a move, both in terms of travel costs and arrangements, and player recruitment and retention, the Committee decided to mount a formal appeal against this decision. An excellent case was prepared and presented to the FA Appeals Committee by John, Barbara and vice-Chair Richard Rooney. They stood firm and persisted in arguing the club’s case with determination and resolve. Eventually the appeal was upheld and we were offered a place in the Combined Counties Premier Division, even though for one season the league would have to run with 23 clubs.

Given their wide knowledge of local clubs and players, Ricky and Danny’s team were invited to continue in their roles with Mark Chandler taking over as joint manager following Danny’s resignation. Unfortunately, due to poor league results which left the club languishing at the foot of the CCL Premier Division table, the NGU committee reluctantly decided to part company with Ricky and Mark at the beginning of October 2016. The experienced management team of Danny Vincent and Colin Murphy were offered and accepted the position, and were duly appointed in time to take charge of the Chertsey Town home game on 11th October.

After the poor start the club eventually finished the 2016/17 season in a creditable 13th position on 58 points. With Danny and Colin still in charge, assisted by Terry Schofield who joined the First XI management team, we were looking for a much higher finish last season. Unfortunately, after an excellent start with a fine FA Cup away win against Welwyn Garden City, during the earlier part of the 2017/18 campaign we became the league’s draw specialists dropping points in games we should have won.

From the turn of the year the season will be most remembered for some of the worst weather conditions in living memory with the season extended to the second week in May 2018. Despite ending the campaign on a high with four wins on the spin, overall this had been a disappointing season with the team again finishing 13th but with fewer points than the previous year.

Two major changes were then forced on the club during the close season. First last season’s management team unexpectedly resigned and this was followed by an FA decision to move us to the Spartan South Midlands Football League Premier Division.

On the management side we were quick to appoint Paul Palmer and Matt Penfold who had just won promotion from the SSMFL Division One with Southall. Neither Paul nor Matt are new to the club. Matt served here for two terms under Neil Shipperley and Paul took over from Shipps after his resignation in February 2014. Once again, with the experienced squad they are building at the club, we have high expectations at the start of this season’s campaign.