

APPENDIX A
PRINCES PARK ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21

Princes Park June 2020 – May 2021

Gate attendances July 2020 - May 2021: 900 – Due to Coronavirus, our first team season got delayed and only started in October 2020. The games were all played behind closed doors under strict COVID policies and restrictions. The one game we did have a crowd was in September 2020 when we were selected to be a trial game for crowds coming back safely. With the approval of SAG and environmental health, we safely hosted the game and found it very successful. It proved we could welcome back big crowds again as soon as it was safe to do so. All our games were streamed live for supporters to watch, which gave people something to look forward too during lockdown.

Golf usage: April 2020 - March 2021: 5424 rounds by members / loyalty cards holders, & pay on gate rounds. – The golf course has improved massively under the new management, Paul Page Golf Academy. The condition of the course is much improved and new things been added to improve the course. There is also a reception now at the 1st hole and an indoor simulator where Paul carries out lessons. Paul has also got involved in our community programme and delivers golf lessons at some of our primary schools. Membership and casual golfers have increased now that there is someone dedicated to doing this, Paul also held a national competition recently for child golfers. Paul was closed from 23rd March 2020 until middle of May due to Covid 19. He re-opened with all correct guidelines implemented.

Paul Page has continued to run a loyalty scheme where golfers pay for 5 rounds and get their 6th free. The golf course is advertised on twitter, Facebook, website, periodically in the programme and has been advertised in local magazine Dartford Living. An advertising board is pitch side within the stadium, and there is also a road sign on Princes Road by the main gates promoting the golf course. Feedback from members is that the general state of the golf course is excellent compared to previous years.

Community Pitch and Mini Pitches were used by over 30 local clubs in the last year. They all have regular weekly bookings. We also booked in over 100 casual bookings from people in the local community. We were closed from March 2020 until July 2020 and then closed again November 2020 until March 2021 due to lockdowns. Therefore no bookings were taking place on the pitches. The pitches are planned to be refurbished September 2021.

Dartford fc have regular bookings online for all its facilities, it allows people to book golf, mini pitches and community pitch online. Payment can be taken there and then through paypal which is easier for the customer.

London City Lionesses ground shared with us for their third season. The team play on Sunday's in the Women's Super League Division 2. Teams in that league included Liverpool, Aston Villa, Tottenham, and Leicester City. This provided great coverage nationwide for Princes Park and attracted interest. They played 12 home games all behind closed doors but streamed live online for people to watch.

Charlton u23 played here last season, playing 12 games in total behind closed doors. Part of the agreement was for our first team to play their first team this July which took place with 2000 in attendance.

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The club run 3 academy teams, one team are linked with Leigh academy alongside the 35 youth teams in the pre academy and junior teams. In total we have 457 children under 16 on our books and 82 over 16 in the Academy.

THE LEIGH ACADEMY x1 team

Dartford Football Club is linked with neighbouring school, The Leigh Academy, to give students the opportunity to continue working towards their A-Levels whilst pursuing their passion in Football.

Phil Murray (Head of DFC Youth Development) and Sean Scolding (DFC Community Lead) have been working alongside Simon Beamish (Leigh Academies Trust CEO), Sue Crocker (Leigh Academies Trust Business Director) and Sharon Waterman (Leigh Academy Principal) in order for the scheme to come together. With The Leigh Academy and Dartford FC being located next door to each other it was an opportunity that no one involved could miss out on and a chance to create an ongoing partnership.

Dartford FC already has an Academy in place which runs in partnership with SCL and offers students the chance to gain BTECs along with qualifications and experience in football. Due to many young adults aspiring to go to university after their school education is over, the necessity of A Levels is something that students would currently miss out on at Dartford. The new partnership with The Leigh Academy now enables those who have a passion for football to continue their studies towards the qualifications they need whilst receiving regular training and coaching from highly qualified FA coaches affiliated to the football club, plus the opportunity to represent the club at levels between Youth Conference Alliance League and the new SCL League with the possibility of progressing into the First Team or higher.

With A Levels such as Biology, Media Studies and P.E. to choose from there is a suitable variety of options available for any candidate who is interested in the scheme. In order for students to gain their place on the course they must obtain 5 GCSEs grade A-C including Maths and English. Once their academic application is successful they will be offered a trial at Dartford Football Club.

We currently have x16 Year 1 students and x8 Year 2 student's .Next season we obviously hope that all x16 year 1 students will continue into year 2 and we take a new intake of year 1 students, doubling our numbers from Leigh Academy.

SCL x2 teams (50 students)

COURSE

A 2-year, full-time education and football development programme for 16-18 year olds.

Year 1 - BTEC Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma in Sport

Year 2 - BTEC Level 3 Diploma in Sport

Players will study a variety of nationally-recognised qualifications within sport, coaching and fitness managed by SCL. Where required students will study Maths and English GCSE or Functional Skills. SCL Education Group is one of the UK's leading independent providers of education through sport and Government approved post-16 private education provider. Experts in the field of sport and education delivery with over 15 years' experience.

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- Programmes delivered in real sports environments
- Proven Progression routes
- UCAS POINTS Up to 280
- LEAGUE- Conference Youth Alliance and SCL league
- COST-FREE for 16-18 year olds
- ENTRY REQUIREMENTS-3 GCSEs A-C preferably one Maths or English
- FOOTBALL TRAINING-Dartford FC
- EDUCATION PROVIDER
 - SCL Education Group
 - Play in the Football in the Conference Youth Alliance and SCL league
 - Daily training from highly qualified FA coaches
 - Guidance on individual football fitness
 - Nutritional advice
 - Regular appraisal to monitor development both on and off the pitch

The Dartford FC Academy is the pinnacle of the football club's development programme and the final stage of preparation prior to Reserve and First Team football.

With our extensive youth development system, we have developed an outstanding reputation for nurturing talented players through this and into professional and non-league football.

The Academy will play a fundamental role in Dartford FC's youth department which will strive to create a development culture with the primary function of developing players to compete in the First Team squad.

Here at Dartford FC, we are passionate about developing young footballers through the delivery of quality coaching, a unique and unrivalled education programme with the use of modern, state-of-the-art-facilities.

Players such as Charlie Sheringham (AFC Bournemouth), Cody McDonald (Coventry City FC) and Dave Martin (Derby County FC) have all developed their football with the First Team at Dartford Football Club before being signed by their respective professional clubs showing the calibre of player that the football club is producing.

PRE-ACADEMY (7-16)

The pre-academy at Dartford FC forms part of our player pathway to first team football at the club. We aim to create a learning environment where talented young players, many of whom have been at professional clubs, can continue to progress. Whilst winning is important, our emphasis focuses on the way we play. Therefore, developing players who have tactical as well as technical skill is delivered throughout the years through a well-balanced learning syllabus.

Our squads start at u7 (school year 2) and go through to u16s (school year 11), they then trial for our full academy if they have achieved the standards required. At an appropriate point, players are signed exclusively to the pre-academy squads, until then they can play for their local club teams as well. The squads play in the Elite Development Programme (EDP) against professional and semi-professional advanced player centres. They also play against professional club academy squads.

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The U13s – U16s are members of the Junior Premier League with such teams as Portsmouth, Bournemouth, Woking, Isle of Wight, Basingstoke, and Charlton. Foundation squad players are expected to be coached for 1.5 hours per week and the Development phase players for 3 hours per week. They are coached by minimum FA Level 2, YCA Module 2 coaches, or coaches who are working towards that minimum standard.

The pre-academy is divided into two phases for players to learn and develop in the way that our clubs wants them to. We feel that this meets the requirements of the FA strategy, 'The Future Game' and mirrors the approach taken in in the professional academy environments through the Elite Player Performance Plan.

FOUNDATION PHASE

This phase focuses on the development of our u8s – u11. At these ages we focus on Agility, Balance & Coordination (ABC's). Fun and technique are paramount. Whilst it is serious stuff, we like the players to learn and develop in a more 'discovered learning' environment, so developing an inquiring mind and approach is key. A mild sense of self-discipline will be instilled as well.

DEVELOPMENT PHASE

This phase focuses on the development of our u12s – u16s. Whilst technical ability is still key in terms of the player development process, at these ages players start to learn about the bigger game. Roles, responsibilities and tactical application on the field come above winning. A winning mentality is strongly encouraged, but not at the cost of losing sight of playing our kind of football. Footballers for all scenarios during in a game, is what we need. To be able to read a game and know what is required as: an individual; part of a function; and, as a squad as a whole, whilst being strongly disciplined....will see a player through to our Academy! We are looking next season at starting to run apprenticeships, where students play football with us and then go to college and do so many hours a week also learning a trade.

ELITE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

We have joined a programme involving professional and semi-professional club advanced and development centres. Primarily, this involves playing clubs in tri-tournaments during school holidays. The clubs involved are: Arsenal, Brighton, MK Dons, Wycombe Wanderers, Walsall, Northampton, Histon, Oxford, Brentford and Luton.

In addition to the Elite Development Programme, we play against: Millwall, Gillingham, QPR, Fulham, West Ham, West Bromwich, Woking, Basingstoke, Leyton Orient and Bournemouth. In the main, these fixtures involve our Development Phase (u12s – u16s) squads.

The club is keen to support local football in the Kent County as well. Our Development Phase squads continue to support the local county cup competitions. In addition, we are working with other clubs, the FA and local /national youth leagues, in order to create a strategic approach to delivering a programme just outside of the professional game.

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GIRLS SQUADS

Dartford FC already has a thriving girl's structure. We now have 5 teams from U14s- U16s and a Ladies 1st team, who train at the club once a week coached by qualified Pre Academy staff. We also run a girls development centre (school years 3 – 6) with the aim of the sessions to develop existing talent and encourage girls in the community to get involved in the club. We hope that with a few years hard work we can see a vast improvement in the numbers of girls' squads on offer. Their competitive games are played in the Kent Girls and Ladies football league.

The ladies 1st team have completed their third season. But unfortunately due to Covid their season did not start. In May 21 they did get to compete in the Kent cup final which was delayed from before Covid. They won in the final which was held at Maidstone.

Dartford Junior Section

Dartford Football Club runs a thriving and successful Junior Section with teams ranging from U 7 through to U21's x20 teams in total. All those involved are volunteers, including managers and coaches.

The aim of the Junior Section is to provide adequate facilities for training and matches, arrange matches and social events for the members and the surrounding community, provide a competitive, friendly standard of football for boys and girls aged 7-21 at the cheapest possible price and to promote the game of 'association football'.

The club holds the prestigious FA Charter Standard status and has been awarded one of the highest levels possible that of a Development Club.

All our Junior Team Managers and Coaches are CRB checked, qualified to a minimum of FA Level 1 with some going on to achieve FA Level 2. Each team has at least 1 Coach and/or Manager that has attended the FA Safeguarding Children & 1st Aid Workshops. The Child Welfare Officer and Committee members regularly carry out checks to ensure that managers and coaches adhere to the rules of the club. These include ensuring the safety of the children whilst in their care and carry out spot checks at matches to ensure managers have a full first aid kit.

Mini Soccer School

Our mini soccer school operates on a pay and play basis meeting every Saturday during the football season – September to May. Our sessions consist of fun based learning of all aspects of football including:

- Passing
- Dribbling (close ball skills)
- Shooting
- 1v1 skills
- Team work

Our aim is to nurture the interest and love of football in boys and girls aged 4-6 (reception- Yr1 only) with the option of joining a Dartford Junior Section team when they reach the appropriate age

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group. At intervals during the season, there may be opportunities for players to get involved with tournaments and competitions giving them practical experience of playing in a team.

The coaches who run our Mini Soccer School come from our own Junior Section and are CRB checked, hold FA Safeguarding Children qualifications, First Aid badges and are trained to FA Level 1 standard.

Our Mini Soccer School is run on the 3G mini all weather pitches which are a great surface for children to learn and develop their footballing skills.

Community

The community section is now into its third full year and is becoming well established. We employ 2 full time staff supported by 6 casual staff. The aim was to really increase community activity in the Borough and financially provide revenue for the club that we had not really explored before.

The junior section (Sunday football boys and girls) has now come under the umbrella of the community where it used to be a separate company. They also became the only community club in Kent to be awarded the Premier League Stars programme and they deliver reading programmes in primary schools. We have a partnership with Playplace to deliver support to youth clubs on local estates in Dartford. Holiday courses were well attended up until February 2020 on average 40 children a day. We also put a coach into 15 primary schools in the borough who had one on one sessions with children identified by the school for needing extra help with reading. The community section funded a pentanque area to be built and purchased equipment for multi sports. This area is used by the Over 50's group. The special needs group and Milestone came up once a week to use the facilities and be coached in multi sports. The mini pitches were used for a lot of schools tournament last year which is good as Princes Park has become the main finals stadium for schools.

Catering & Functions

The whole catering facilities were closed from March 2020 – June 2021 apart from being open for G4S ambulance training throughout the pandemic.

Champions Bar is open daily from 10am – 10pm for golfers, parents for football and general public during the times we were allowed to be open.

The Road runners still use our facilities on Tuesday's and Sunday's. We are hopefully hosting their 5 mile run in August where runners from all over the area will start and finish at Princes Park and will be running around the Dartford area.

The giving blood centre has been continuing throughout lockdowns and over the past year. There was a high response for attendance which was good.

New

From January 2021 – June 2021 we were a vaccine centre on behalf of DGS health. This was a big success that had the whole community use our facilities to have their Covid jabs. Whilst there was no football going on, it was good to be able to offer our facilities to help.

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Improvements were made to the overflow car park to fill in pot holes and resurface areas, this will be done again this summer, and is part of the G4S contract to maintain.

All communal areas have been decorated this summer.

A new in fill has been created underneath the Princes suite balcony, to accommodate a new club shop. This shop will be more visible to the public than the previous one.

Jack Smedley- Princes Park Operations Manager

Dartford Football Club

30 September 2021