

# WINGATE & FINCHLEY FOOTBALL CLUB

Wingate & Finchley vs  
Carshalton Athletic



VS



Tuesday 5th  
November 2024- 7.45PM KO

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# WINGATE & FINCHLEY FC

**Hello and welcome to the Maurice Rebak Stadium! We hope that all associated with the club, the match officials and the staff, players and officials of Carshalton Athletic enjoy their stay in N12 this evening!**

We welcome our friends from the south of the river to the Maurice Rebak Stadium off the back of a disappointing defeat at Dulwich on Saturday. We had been leading for a significant part of the game thanks to an Ogo Obi goal in the 17<sup>th</sup> minute, but were defeated with Hamlet goals in the 56<sup>th</sup> and 90<sup>th</sup>+7<sup>th</sup> minute.

This is already our second league outing of the season against Carshalton, leaving the War Memorial Ground with a 3-2 defeat on 12<sup>th</sup> August.

Last season we won both ties against Athletic – a 3-2 away win on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2023 and a 3-0 win at home on the final day of the season, 27<sup>th</sup> April, to secure our spot in the playoffs.

Coming into tonight's fixture, we occupy 5<sup>th</sup> place, the final playoff spot, just edging Dulwich on goal difference. Our opponents, however, are in 10<sup>th</sup> place, four points behind having played one less league game.

**Company Name and Number:**

Wingate and Finchley Development Ltd, 6014465

**Ground:** The Maurice Rebak Stadium, Summers Lane, Finchley, London N12 0PD. Tel: 020 8446 2217

**Company Number:** 6014465

**Training Ground:** Barnet Lane, Barnet, EN5 2DN

**League Match Ticket Prices:**

£12 adults, £8 concession, £5 for ages 11-18, under 11 free

**Chairman:** Aron Sharpe

**Vice Chairman:** Nicky Rifat, Joe Sharpe

**President:** Harvey Ackerman

**Life Vice President:** David Ackerman

**Life Vice President:** David Wolff

**Life Vice President:** Peter Rebak

**Life Vice President:** Steven Astaire

**Director:** Paul Lerman

**Secretary:** Andrew Kouroushi

**Finance:** Liam Blaney

**First Team Manager:** Ahmet Rifat

**First Team Coaches:** Ruben Gaspar, Jonny Georgiou, Ricky Machel

**First Team Goalkeeping Coach:**

Gavin King

**First Team Analyst:** Michael Smith

**Kit Manager:** Peter Barker

**Head Groundsman:** Andy Ward

**Welfare Officer:** Jonny Georgiou

**Bar Manager:** Lorraine Coleman

**Matchday Hospitality:** Tony Ward

**Programme Editor:** Joshua Palmer

# CLUB NOTES

## **Congratulations David Wolff!**

Our life vice-president David Wolff has recently received the London FA's Bobby Moore Award for 2024 Grassroots Heroes Award (sponsored by Panini!)

Congratulations David!

Mr Wolff is also chairman of the Maccabi (Southern) GB Football League (since 1970!), overseeing the organisation of the league.

His footballing career began back in the 1950s as a member of the Ivri Maccabi Youth League and is a supporter of West Ham United – once being asked to manage their under 16s team. He joined the MSFL Management Committee in December 1963 as assistant secretary, before rising to vice chairman in 1965 then chairman in 1970. During his directorship, the league has risen from 12 clubs to 66.

David has also chaired the London FA since 2022.

From all at the club, congratulations on your award David!

## **Velocity Isthmian League Cup**

Following their win at Haringey Borough last week, it has now been confirmed that we will host Tilbury in the third round of the competition. The tie will take place here at the Marice Rebak Stadium next Tuesday evening, 7.45pm kick off.

## **Upcoming fixtures**

Tonight is the first of FIVE home fixtures in November, with an away game in Sussex in between:

Saturday 9<sup>th</sup>: **Hastings United (H)** (Isthmian League)

Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup>: **Tilbury (H)** (League Cup)

Saturday 16<sup>th</sup>: **Whitehawk (A)** (Isthmian League)

Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup>: **Chatham Town (A)** (Isthmian League)

Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup>: **Horsham (A)** (Isthmian League)

Saturday 30<sup>th</sup>: **Hashtag United (A)** (Isthmian League)

## **Erith and Belvedere (H)**

Last week we beat Erith and Belvedere in the London Senior Cup 1-0, thanks to a 90+3<sup>rd</sup> minute goal from Jaiden Drakes-Thomas. We host the winner of Fisher v Charlton Athletic, played tonight.

## **Top scorers 2024/25**

Competitive first team games only.  
Total games played: 11 league, 4 cup

	Lge	Cup	Tot.
Obi	11	3	14
Lowe	3	0	3
Georgiou	3	0	3
Frempah	3	0	3
Oladipo	3	0	3
Tanimowo	3	0	3
Deslandes	2	0	3
Briscoe	1	0	3
Drakes-Thomas	1	1	2
Iontton	1	0	1

# LEAGUE RESPECT STATEMENT



**“The Isthmian Football League strongly supports the Football Association’s statement that there should be a zero-tolerance approach against all forms of discrimination. Any inappropriate conduct toward others, including but not limited to that based on an individual’s sex, race, colour, weight, size, religion and belief, national origin, age, marital or domestic-partnership status, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression, will not be tolerated and will be reported to the relevant authorities. The Isthmian League and our Member Clubs are committed to promoting equity and equality by treating all people fairly and with respect, by recognising that inequalities may exist, by taking steps to address them and providing access and opportunities for all members of our communities.”**



# Respect

## A VIEW FROM AFAR

***Tonight's little thought provoker concerns facts about Finchley. Only one is true, but which one? Answer at the end of the column.***

- *Charles Dickens wrote Martin Chuzzlewit in Finchley, not ¼ mile from this ground*
- *Margaret Thatcher lost two elections in Finchley before eventually taking her seat*
- *Andrew Ridgeley of Wham was born in Finchley*

Last season, as you will all doubtless recall, the visit of Carshalton was the final game of the regular season and victory saw us through the play-offs, where we cunningly failed to progress in order to avoid Tuesday nights in places such as Truro or Weston-super-Mare. At the latter, if the tide is out it takes about an hour to walk out and paddle your toes, so if you are unlucky, a quick splash after the game is out of the question. The former is often a forgotten answer on Pointless when a question concerning cities crops up.

None of this has anything to do with football, the Isthmian League or Carshalton, which will come as no surprise to either of my readers. I must say, I like Carshalton; an old fashioned football ground, albeit with a 3G pitch nowadays and a very pleasant suburb through which to drive, with Carshalton Ponds proving an attractive distraction should you be unfortunate enough to leave the ground without any points. The ground itself is welcoming, as long as you don't count the occasion when the lady wife and I walked straight through a child's birthday party in part of the clubhouse when looking for the toilets.

This is something that many of us will have done when visiting a less than familiar ground – not disturbing a party, obviously, just looking for the facilities. Some years ago I alluded to the small block that once stood in the north west corner here at Summers Lane – visiting supporters will be relieved (perhaps an unfortunate choice of word in the circumstances) to learn that the block was demolished in about 1970, as even then anybody having the misfortune to use them required both a gas mask and an immediate visit to A&E for a cholera injection.

I may have mentioned before my one and only visit to Roots Hall, home of Southend United, where after visiting the gents at half time I swore never to touch my shoes again. The lady wife tends to rate football grounds by the standard of the loos and the ground where she had to stick her foot out to keep the door shut ranks low on her list. It would be unfair to name it in public

## A VIEW FROM AFAR

(Chatham). Even at Lewes, many people's favourite non league ground, the one occasion that we took our little granddaughter resulted in a letter to the Chairman! Here at the home of football, of course, no such issues arise. When nature calls, you are greeted by a perfumed ambience and modern facilities. Proximity to the bar and adjacence to the chip stall are added attractions.

I have heard the odd toilet facility at football grounds likened to either a Georgian Wrestler's Jock Strap or a Tart's Boudoir. Having never visited the latter, I couldn't possibly comment; that's my story and I'm sticking to it.

*Answer to the question?*

*Dickens did write the book in Finchley, at Cogley Farm, now Quens Avenue. Margaret Thatcher was defeated twice, but in Dartford. Ridgeley wasn't born in Finchley, but George Michael was!*

**By Peter Brown**

# WINGATE & FINCHLEY CLUB HISTORY

Wingate and Finchley Football club can trace its roots back to the formation of Finchley Football Club in 1874 making it one of the oldest clubs in the country. Founded by Pa Jackson, who also was instrumental in the creation of the Corinthians, The London Football Association as well as later serving as secretary of the FA, Finchley became founder members of the Athenian League in 1912 after spells in the London League and North London League. They finished fourth in the maiden season, higher than such luminaries as Grays Athletic, Chelmsford City and Enfield.

However their stay was cut short due to the onset of World War One and they would only return for a lone season in 1929 before returning to the London League and forging success. The club's first piece of silverware was won during the 1934-1935 season when the League Cup was captured, with the taste of achievement forming Finchley went on to win the London League in 1936-1937 before World War Two scuppered their winning streak.

It was immediately after the conflict that saw Major Harry Sadow, Frank Davis, George Hyams and Asher Rebak form a Jewish Football Club believing the field of play was a ground of battling the ignorance of anti-Semitism. So in 1946 Wingate Football Club began life in the Middlesex Senior League. The club was named after General Orde C. Wingate who despite not being Jewish himself oversaw the creation of the Israeli Army during the Second World War. The club enjoyed early success and by 1952 they were promoted to the London League.

Meanwhile Finchley, back in the Athenian League, were in the middle of their glory years with the 1952-1953 season proving to be the pinnacle. That year saw their progression to the Third Round Proper of the FA Cup. Defeated along the way were Chelmsford City, Kidderminster Harriers (1-0 at Aggborough) and Crystal Palace (3-1 at Summers Lane) before the Finches were finally beaten 2-0 at Gay Meadow against Shrewsbury Town.

Despite an Amateur Cup semi-final appearance, losing to bitter local rivals Hendon at Highbury in 1965, a sense of decline was starting to emerge. A switch to the Isthmian Premier League failed to stop the halt, and in 1980-81 Finchley were relegated to the second division.

Wingate by now had become a senior club and were competing in the Athenian League. Many players had become members of the Middlesex FA representative side and also partook on behalf of Great Britain in the Maccabiah Games. Disaster struck though in 1972 when their Hall Lane ground in Hendon was lost to the M1 extension and despite a short ground share with Finchley FC the club reverted to junior football.

Wingate finally returned to the senior game with a brief merger with Leyton FC. This partnership proved to be unsuccessful and despite a 1984-1985 League Cup victory, ironically defeating Finchley in the final, both clubs went their separate ways.

In 1991 with Finchley struggling in the Isthmian League Second Division and with mounting debts it was announced that a merger with Wingate would take place in the



# WINGATE & FINCHLEY CLUB HISTORY

summer. After extensive refurbishment and a name change of the Summers Lane ground in honour of long time Wingate supporter Harry Abrahams, Wingate and Finchley took to the field for the start of the 1991-1992 season.

Success was immediate and despite starting life in the South Midlands League the club were quickly competing in the Isthmian League and by season 2003-2004 were members of the newly formed Division One North.

In recent seasons the club has continued its growth. A brief flirtation with the Southern League was shortly followed by the arrivals of Manager Michael Stone and Chairman Aron Sharpe. Now back in the Isthmian League a youthful squad achieved seventh position in the First Division North in the 2008-2009.

Stone sadly left the club in 2009 after being offered the post of Assistant Manager at Conference giants Rushden and Diamonds. The club's first team manager in time for the start of the 2009/10 season was former Oswestry Town manager and Total Network Solutions Llansantffraid midfielder David Norman. At the end this season the Club finished in a record high position of 3rd in the Ryman Division One North, mainly thanks to a record run of 17 matches without defeat from the turn of the year, a run which included 13 wins. The Club reached the playoffs but lost out to Enfield Town in the semi-final 3-2 in an incredible match. This paved the way for what was to be a monumental and unforgettable 2010/11 season.

The Club was quickly becoming the most progressive non-league club in the area, thanks to Sharpe's focus on youth development. Bobby Aisien and Medi Alabimba had progressed from Hadley Wood and Wingate to earn professional contracts, and in 2011 over 20 of the U16-18 age group represented their County. Six boys at U16's were given scholarships with pro sides and the club developed into a community club with a Mencap disability initiative, work with schools, and it entered its fourth year of the Flex educational scheme.

A consistent league season for the First Team saw the side match their previous 3rd place league finish and earn a second crack at the playoffs. In the semi-final Harlow Town were beaten 4-2 after extra time, and promotion to the Ryman premier Division was won with a 118th minute winner over Brentwood Town in extra time of the final - The Blues winning 3-2 on their home turf.

This victory was the middle leg of a remarkable and unique Treble. Earlier that season the club had lifted the Ryman League Cup having beaten Dulwich Hamlet 2-0 at Imber Court, and London Senior Cup success was to follow shortly afterwards when Hendon were convincingly beaten 3-1 in the final.

Success flowed throughout the Club this year, with the youth teams also building on their previous season's work as they progressed superbly. The U18's won the Middlesex County Cup, and at U15 level the League Title and three Cup trophies followed (two County cups and the League cup). Even the Under 10's were getting in on the action as they lifted the Spring Cup!

# WINGATE & FINCHLEY CLUB HISTORY

The first season in the Ryman Premier Division in 2011/12 saw the side secure safety in this new level with a comfortable mid-table finish, ending up closer to the playoffs than from relegation. The final third of the season saw breakthroughs for youth players Liron Mannie and David Smouha who both played big roles in the first team squad. Meanwhile there was huge cup success at youth level yet again; The Under 18's won the AFA Cup, beating Valley Park after extra time, as well as the London County Cup. The Under 17's won a double as they beat Thurrock in the EJA League Cup final to add to their earlier AFA Cup success having beaten Bethwin 8-1! The Under 16's also got in on the action securing their AFA Cup title beating Woodford FC, which they added later on securing their EJA (Herts) League title.

Success of the youth sides prompted three players - Ross Weinreb, Nathan Sollosi and Joe Sharpe - to earn selection to the Great Britain Maccabi Team for the world games in Israel during July 2013. Meanwhile the Barnet Mencap disability sides grew in strength as they entered the fourth season with the club, with three sides now competing in the Camden Step Leagues. The year ended on a high as McDonalds joined in lucrative sponsorship deal.

The following season, 2012-13, was a difficult one for the first team. Early season poor form led to the departure of Norman in November as ex-Northwood boss Gary Meakin came in. The Club flirted with relegation all season until a momentous 3-2 victory over Lowestoft two days before the final day secured survival. However Norman rejoined the Club in the summer as Director of Football, as veteran defender Daniel Nielsen was put in place as Head Coach. Meanwhile a new Under 21 Development squad was set up to compete in the inaugural Ryman U21 League.

There was continual success for the youth sides. The U17's added the London County Cup to an earlier EJA league title, the EJA cup and the AFA cup. These were also followed up with the League Regional Playoff title. The U16's won two cups in this season, the EJA and AFA trophies.

In 2014 the side faced another relegation fight in the league, which was lost on goal difference on the final day of the season despite a 5-0 victory over Billericay Town. However, when Worksop Town pulled out of the Southern League due to financial problems, Wingate & Finchley were the first in line to earn the reprieve back to the Ryman Premier Division.

The 2014-15 season resulted in a record finish of 12th place in the Ryman Premier League, and at the end of the season Norman departed, to be replaced by Simon Lane as Director of Football. However for the start of 2016 he was replaced by former Northern Ireland International Keith Rowland and the side finished in a stable 13th position. In August 2016 the stadium at Summers Lane was re-named after Wingate FC co-founder Maurice Rebak who had passed away in February of that year aged 95.

# WINGATE & FINCHLEY CLUB HISTORY

The 2016-17 season saw the club set a new record, finishing in 5th place in the Ryman Premier League and qualifying for the end of season playoffs. A last-minute defeat at Bognor Regis Town in the semi-final ended the season, but this was a magnificent achievement and saw the Blues win the League's Team Performance of the Year Award.

A ninth-place finish followed in 2017-18 as the Blues narrowly missed out on a second successive play-off berth. There was success for the Under 23 side who won the Isthmian Development League North Division at a canter. Over the summer the Club embarked on an extensive state-of-the-art refurbishment of the stadium, for the first time since 1991's merger, giving the clubhouse a much-welcomed overhaul and making the stadium one of the most impressive in non-league football.

The subsequent three seasons saw a period of uncertainty both on and off the pitch, with short management stints for ex England International Nicky Shorey, ex Premier League stalwart Glen Little and ex West Ham Academy and Wingate & Finchley favourite Steve Clarke, followed by two null and void seasons under the stewardship of Spencer Knight due to the COVID pandemic. However, during this period there were still many successes, including U18s winning County Cup in consecutive seasons and the London Champion of Champions trophy, U23 Development Squad being victorious in Herts League Cup fielding a squad largely made up of Under 18s, while both U13s and U12s secured League Titles.

In the summer of 2021, Club legends Ahmet Rifat (Director of Football) and Marc Weatherstone (Manager) were appointed as a new Management Team after nearly 1000 first team appearances between them. Later in the 2022/23 season Ahmet Rifat was to take sole charge.

Season 2024/24 will go down on record as one of our finest if not the finest. Finishing in 4<sup>th</sup> position with a record haul of 76 points and scoring 78 goals. Ahmet Rifat's charges made it to the play offs on the last day of the season with a 3-0 win over Carshalton.

We faced local rivals Enfield Town in the play off Semi finals at the QE II Stadium. We narrowly lost a very tight match 1-0 in front of a crowd of 2,225 that night. A fine season was ended, but what memories it brought.

What does 2024/25 hold, a new revamped side, and a manager and coaching squad with that extra years experience. Looking forward to the journey.

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## ERITH AND BELVEDERE (H) – NOAH BERCOTT

### **Drakes-Thomas late strike ensures Blues progress in London Senior Cup**

After some excellent results in the league in recent weeks, Tuesday night saw the Blues turn their attentions to cup action. So far, the cup competitions haven't proved to be happy hunting grounds this season, so those in attendance were hoping for improved fortunes in the London Senior Cup. The management team made a number of changes for this game, including giving starts to teenagers Tommy Roberts and Bobby Webb, the latter being given the captain's armband for the game, while youngster Theodore Behe was also given his first taste of first team action on the subs bench.

The first action of the match came just a matter of seconds in when a long ball from Ayo Tanimowo found Zack Newton in a one-on-one situation, only for his shot to be blocked by the visiting goalkeeper, the first of many saves by the visiting number one Charlie Cottrell. Despite a fast start, the home side were not able to create another clear-cut chance until the 34th minute when Jaiden Drakes-Thomas received the ball from provider Tanimowo again, but again the strike was parried by the Erith & Belvedere goalkeeper from close range.

Erith & Belvedere performed well throughout the match, and in the second half they put their stamp in the game, culminating in two agonisingly close chances at goal in the later stages of the half. The first coming when Freddie Baker was through on goal, with Grainger getting a strong palm to the ball. The subsequent corner led to a chance for Ronnie McClean to get a head to the ball only for Grainger to again make an excellent stop, diving to his left to tip the ball over the goal.

The last action of the game led to Wingate securing their place in the third round of the London Senior Cup when a well worked attack ended up with the ball falling to Drakes-Thomas 25 yards outside of the box to strike the ball in to the bottom right corner of the goal in what was practically the final kick of the game, to break the visitors' hearts.

Elsewhere tonight, our Velocity Cup opponents were confirmed as Tilbury came back from 4-0 down against Haringey Borough to set up a clash at the Maurice Rebak Stadium in two weeks' time.

**Wingate & Finchley:** Grainger; Garrett-Douglas; Byron; Iontton (Lowe 77'); Webb; Drakes-Thomas; Newton; Tanimowo; Briscoe; Roberts (Obi 82'); Hernandez (Cracknell 68')

**Unused subs:** Behe, Georgiou

**Attendance:** 78

# CARSHALTON ATHLETIC

## **The early years**

Carshalton Athletic traces its roots to two separate teams playing in the area of Wrythe Green in Carshalton in the early twentieth century. Whilst the club's history is dated to the formation of Mill Lane Mission in 1905 it also recognises the importance of officials, players and supporters of Carshalton St Andrews in its history. Mill Lane Mission was organised by the Mill Lane Mission recreational facility for teenage boys and began playing friendlies in 1903. They were formally registered with the Surrey County FA in September 1905 and continued to play only friendly matches until 1906 when they joined the Croydon & District League Division 2A. During 1905 and 1906 discussions were held with Carshalton St Andrews over amalgamation.

Carshalton St Andrews was formed in 1897 by the vicar of St Andrews, Revd. C.W. Cleaver and began playing in the Surrey County Herald League. In 1902 they were promoted into the Southern Suburban League Division 2 West. They agreed to fold and amalgamate with Mill Lane Mission in 1906 but did not formally do so until they had honoured their remaining obligations at the end of the 1907–08 season. Meanwhile, Mill Lane Mission registered their name change with the Surrey F.A. and began playing under the name Carshalton Athletic F.C. in 1907. The first ever match under this name was on 7 September 1907 at home on the Wrythe Green recreation ground in a friendly against Westbrook (Thornton Heath).

Carshalton Athletic's first colours were red with white stripes, adopted from St Andrews from whom the Robins were formed when merged with Mill Lane Mission. After the name change the club went to win successive promotions in 1908, 1909 and 1910 which was rewarded with election to the Junior Division of Southern Suburban League. During this time the club put out a reserve side and a midweek Carshalton Wednesday side (many clubs set up these sides to play after the shops had shut 'early' on Wednesdays) and these two sides both performed well – the reserves winning the Croydon and District League Division 2A in 1909 and Carshalton Wednesday were runners up in the inaugural Surrey County Midweek Cup.

Before the outbreak of the First World War further success in both league and junior cup competitions was achieved. In 1913 the club won the Suburban League Division 1 West and the following season added the Suburban League Division 1 East title to this. In the same period they also won the Surrey Junior Cup, Surrey Junior Charity Cup and the Croydon Charity Cup and were runners up in the London Junior Cup. The outbreak of the war curtailed this period of success and the club went into a period of suspended animation during the war as its home ground was given over to agricultural use. Following the reformation of the club on 31 March 1919, and after playing on a number of different grounds, Carshalton Athletic finally moved into their new (and current) home in Colston Avenue during the 1920–21 season. This was built as a memorial to those members of the club who lost their lives in the War.

The inter-war years were otherwise relatively uneventful. The only silverware the club won was the Surrey Intermediate Cup, in 1922 and 1932. In the league, the club remained in the Southern Suburban League, finishing as runners up in 1922 before becoming founding members of the Surrey Senior League in the 1922–23 season. At the same time the club gained Football Association senior club status and this allowed Carshalton Athletic to enter FA national competitions and county senior cups for the first time.

## **Post-war and the Corinthian League**

With the upheavals of the Second World War in Europe over, preparations for the resumption in football at Colston Avenue began 1945 with applications made to join the London League (senior side) Surrey Intermediate League (reserve side) and to enter the London Senior and Surrey Senior cups. The club did not apply to enter the FA Challenge Cup or FA Amateur Cup because facilities at the ground were not up to standard for these competitions. The club did make it a priority to improve the standard of the ground and facilities to make them suitable for the higher reaches of the amateur game but all this work had to be funded and carried out by volunteers as the local District Council were unwilling to help support these improvements. Fortunately it proved possible to find volunteers and donors to enable this work to be carried out. The work on the ground proved to be needed the following season as Carshalton Athletic were elected into the Corinthian League, which had been set up in the previous year, for the 1946–47 season

Several years of indifferent league form followed with only minor highlights in cup competitions, although the club continued to grow as evidenced by a record attendance of over 8000 for an FA Challenge Cup 3rd

# CARSHALTON ATHLETIC

round qualifying tie against local rivals Tooting and Mitcham United. Behind the scenes the club was taking steps to improve the club's chances on the pitch including hiring a coach for all sides for the first time but the club committee ensured that they retained the final say in selection decisions. A far better period began with the first match Carshalton Athletic played against a team from overseas at the start of the 1952–53 season. Hengelo from the Netherlands were the opponents in what was to become a regular friendly fixture over following years. Carshalton went on to win the Corinthian League title by 3 points from Hounslow Town at the end of the season and the reserve team finished second in their league, 2 points behind Uxbridge. The 1953–54 season brought further success as Carshalton Athletic retain the league title, finishing 2 points ahead of Edgware Town, although cup success was still proving elusive.

This was rectified somewhat in the 1954–55 season as the club reached the final of the Surrey Senior Shield and the quarter finals of the FA Amateur Cup for the first time in their history (this was also the first year in which two Corinthian League teams reached the quarter finals). The 1955–56 season was unremarkable on the pitch but did see further advances around the ground as Carshalton Athletic's success of recent season was reflected in the size of the supporters club with over 2000 members. It was also the club's last appearance in the Corinthian League as the summer of 1956 saw election to the Athenian League.

## **Athenian League**

For the next 17 years the club competed in the Athenian League with very little success never really threatening to win the league, and finishing at the bottom of the table twice (1959–60 and 1960–61 seasons). Their best performance coming in the 1963–64 season when the club managed to finish the season in third place. Around the ground floodlights were finally erected on six pylons in 1967. Limited cup success was achieved. A first appearance in the Surrey Senior Cup final came in the 1957–58 season, although Dulwich Hamlet won the final 1–0 and it would be another 31 years before Carshalton Athletic appeared in the final again. There was also success in the FA Amateur Cup as the club reached the quarter finals for the second time in 1959–60. In the same season the club won the Southern Combination Cup for the first time, after losing in the final the previous season.

## **Isthmian League 1973–2004**

In the summer of 1973 Carshalton Athletic finally achieved a promotion of sorts when they were elected as founder members of the newly created Isthmian League Division 2. The first two seasons proved to be a struggle and in their third they just missed out on promotion finishing third in the league. Three years of struggle paid off in the 1976–77 season when promotion to the Isthmian Premier Division after finishing as runners up in the league in a year in which they also won the Surrey Senior Shield. After promotion in the league the club entered another period of struggling, not finishing in the top half until the 1987–88 season. This coincided with the start of years of upheaval in the organisation of the ownership and running of the club both on and off the field. The best that could be offered to supporters in this period was a solitary cup run as the club reached the second round proper of the FA Cup for the first time before losing 4–1 to Fourth Division Torquay United. Over this period Carshalton Athletic had 8 different managers and it was only the final appointment of Billy Smith in August 1986 that began to turn the club's fortunes around.

The first Billy Smith era lasted for nearly 9 years and was the most successful period in the club's history. During his time in charge of the club twice reaching the 1st Round Proper of the FA Challenge Cup, winning the Surrey Senior Cup three times in four years and reaching the final 5 times in 7 years, recording its highest ever placing in the league at the end of the 1988–89 season and winning the London Challenge Cup in 1991. This period came to an end when Billy Smith left to take charge of Kingstonian, and was followed by a rapid turnover of managers. Under John Rains, the club reached the third round of the FA Trophy. Gary Kilby led them to the first round proper of the 1997–98 FA Cup, in which they lost to Stevenage Borough after a replay, and former player Gary Bowyer twice led a successful fight against relegation. In 2000, with the club in severe financial difficulties, the ownership changed hands twice, Bowyer was dismissed, the clubhouse was destroyed in an arson attack, and the ground's landlords, Sutton Council, threatened the club with eviction for breaching their lease. At the end of that season, Carshalton were relegated to Division One. Two years later, Graham Roberts led them to the Division One South title, to gain promotion to the Premier Division. The following season, they finished seventh, thus qualifying for the new Conference South.

## **Conference South**

# CARSHALTON ATHLETIC

After a £12 million plan to rebuild the ground fell through, chairman Steve Friend resigned, followed by manager Billy Smith. Under Jimmy Bolton, Carshalton retained their place in the Conference South in 2004–05. In 2005–06, the club's centenary season, the Club was relegated back to the Isthmian League.

## **Isthmian League 2008–onwards**

The new millennium did little to help the club's financial problems. Like many clubs at the time Carshalton Athletic found it difficult to pay its bills and was severely overstretched by a hefty playing budget. The previous season's relegation was a blow, but the Club was not new to hard times – over the previous two decades the club had been on the edge of bankruptcy numerous times, seeing five different owners and a long line of chairmen. In 2008 the club was technically insolvent. Despite having some success in stabilising Carshalton Athletic, the then current owners could not see a way through its financial difficulties without change, there were large tax bills that the club could not pay. Local businessman Paul Dipre purchased the club in 2008, paid off substantial tax bills and set out a ten year plan to develop the club into a community hub. Dipre promised to rejuvenate the club from the bottom up.

Carshalton finished mid-table in 2006–07 but the following season 2007–08 saw disappointing early results and as a result manager Dave Garland left in October 2007. The appointment of Hayden Bird was one of the last acts of the previous owners. Hayden made some high-profile signings and there was a noticeable commitment to playing attractive, passing football but the Robins still faced another nail-biting fight for survival in the Isthmian League Premier Division. Paul Dipre injected sufficient funds to strengthen the squad in an effort to avoid relegation. It went right to the wire and, miraculously, last day results elsewhere fell perfectly and Carshalton's home win over Tonbridge Angels was enough to secure their status.

The season 2008–09 was the first full season under new ownership. The reserves and junior sections were axed in favour of a new academy and junior section. The club began a long-term investment program to renew its crumbling facilities. Directors and staff were axed in favour of a new management team. The first year under Dipre was one of the club's most successful. On the pitch, aided with 31 goals from Richard Jolly, The Robins finished in 4th place, setting up a play-off semi-final with Tonbridge Angels. Athletic claimed a thrilling 3-2 win to meet Staines Town in the final. Held at Staines's Wheatsheaf Park Ground, Carshalton more than held their own against Staines, who had finished 2nd in the regular season. Sadly for The Robins, an 85th-minute penalty was saved by Staines' keeper Louis Wells, and Scott Taylor scored an extra-time winner for Staines.

At the end of this season the club decided to revert to its original colours of Red and also modernised its badge. The change was supported by the majority of fans who saw the colour change as one that reflected the club's early heritage, but a small group of fans (largely led by the club officials ousted by Dipre) lobbied against the change strongly. On 1 September 2009, manager Hayden Bird resigned as the club's first team manager; Ian Hazel was placed in caretaker charge. On 10 September the club announced the appointment of former Carshalton player Francis Vines as Bird's permanent replacement.

Shortly before the 2010–11 season Mark Butler was placed in charge of the club. After a promising first half of the season, Butler's results went from bad to worse until finally owner Paul Dipre took the reins. The team finished 13th. 2011–12 season was a rollercoaster for the first team. Dipre's first season as manager ended in 16th position. Despite the inconsistent league form there was much to celebrate in the FA Trophy with one of the most Historic results in the club's history when they beat Lincoln City 3–1 at Colston Avenue, Paul Vines scoring a hat-trick. Before the beginning of the following season Dipre resigned from the manager's position and coach Tommy Williams, also a former player of the club, took the reins and officially took the job in October 2012. Carshalton Athletic was bestowed with three community club awards throughout 2012 – the South East Regional Community Club of the Year, the Surrey FA Community Club of the Year and the FA National Community Club of the Year, the latter awarded to (the then) club chairman Frank Thompson, youth development officer Paul Williams and club director Kelly Anscombe by ex-professional footballers Chris Kamara and Martin Keown, plus TV presenter Ben Shepherd.

In the following year the club won the UEFA silver award for the best grassroots club in Europe, one of the greatest accolades in the club's history. In Tommy Williams first season as manager, Carshalton finished 21st in the Isthmian Premier in 2012-13, which ordinarily would have seen them relegated. However, a points



# CARSHALTON ATHLETIC

deduction and consequent relegation for [Thurrock](#) gave them a reprieve, keeping them in the Isthmian Premier for the 2013-14 season. In the following season Carshalton Athletic were relegated to the Ryman South under Stuart Massey.

## **The 3G**

In 2015 the club decided to apply for planning permission to install a 3G pitch. The application was supported by almost everyone at Carshalton Athletic. The 3G was intended to provide facilities for the 500 or so junior players and other local clubs. It would secure the club's future. The club applied for planning. The original planning application was recommended by the council for approval, but rejected by councillors in January 2014. The club appealed, and won in January 2015. The 3g was installed in the Summer of 2015. The entire Ground was also refurbished between May 2016 – August 2017. Colston Avenue has become a busy sports and community hub seven days a week serving teams, clubs and community organisations.

## **2015/16**

The 2015/16 was a reasonable year for the first team finishing a respectable 10th place in Ryman South. Managers Matt Howard and Chris McGinn each had good spells on the pitch. Fans favourite Tommy Bradford won the players of the year award with 24 goals and performances improved as the season went on. By the end of the season and following a number of unsuccessful appointments over recent years, the club decided on a new approach to the 1st team management structure. That new structure was implemented in April 2016 when Peter Adeniyi, Ted Dale and Mike Gilham were appointed as Manager, Head Coach and Coach respectively.

## **2016/17**

Peter Adeniyi's first season was a good one. Peter further improved the teams style of play and pushed the youth policy with renewed vigour. Ex- player Stuart Searle joined Peter's team as coach in replacement of Mike Gilham who had moved into an Academy role at Fulham. The club was in the playoff places for much of the season but not at the time when it counted and finished one place short of a valuable playoff position. Nevertheless The Robins had made clear their ambitions on the pitch and Peter Adeniyi agreed to stay on for the season 2017/18.

## **2017/18**

Peter Adeniyi's second season started with some important new signings. Billy Bishop took the number 1 shirt, Raheem Sterling Parker joined from Chipstead and Jordan Cheadle from Walton casuals. At Christmas Keith Boanas joined the Robins in the role of head Coach. In January, academy graduate and Top goalscorer Mickel Miller transferred to Scottish Premiership side Hamilton Academical for an undisclosed fee. The Robins won the Isthmian South League and were promoted to the Isthmian Premier.

## **2018/19**

The Robins made a comfortable start in the Isthmian Premier league. There were very few team changes from the previous season, but one important signing was that of Harry Ottaway, who joined in January 2019. The team enjoyed a long winning run in the second half of the season to finish runners up in the Isthmian Premier league, but lost their first playoff game against Merstham FC. In 2019 the club launched its Football Academy Programme – a combined education and football development programme for 16-18 year olds.

## **2019/20**

The 2019/20 season Club Chairman Paul Dipre announced the clubs ambitions to reach the National League by 2025. "The last ten years have put the club in a very good place organisationally, financially and structurally, its time to push on with our first team ambitions" Unfortunately, in March 2020, with Carshalton comfortably placed in the playoff positions, the league was curtailed by the COVID pandemic.

## **2020/21**

After the disappointment of the previous season's curtailment due to COVID, First Team manager Peter Adeniyi once again was set the task of promotion. However, COVID was to ruin the teams success on the

# CARSHALTON ATHLETIC

pitch once again. For the second year in succession, with Carshalton comfortably seated in the playoff positions, the league season was terminated by the COVID pandemic.

## 2021/22

The 2021/22 season started well, but a steady decline from Xmas onwards saw the Robins finish in its lowest position during Peter Adeniyi's reign. At the end of the season Peter Adeniyi stepped down as first team manager to take up a position as the director of football. Carshalton Athletic remained at Peter Adeniyi's main employment and he continued to work at the club 5 days a week.

## 2022/23

The vacant manager's position was advertised soon after the end of the 2021/22 season. It took nearly a month of interviews and re-interviews with many well qualified applicants before the new first team manager was chosen. Steve McKimm ex-Tonbridge Angels Manager was given the job. McKimm brought in his coaching team and bench staff and set about the task. There was some success but overall the season was not what was hoped for. Steve McKimm was relieved of his position at the end of the season.

## 2023/24

Club Chairman, Paul Dipre invited Peter Adeniyi to return to the position as manager which was accepted.



**SEASON TICKETS 2024/25**

**EARLY BIRD** EQUIVALENT PRICE PER MATCH

- Adult £135.00 £6.43
- Conc. £90.00 £3.80
- Under 18 FREE

\*EARLY BIRD AVAILABLE UNTIL 31st JULY  
\*\*Concessions over 65 and Students.  
\*\*\*Match Day Tickets £12, Conc-£8, U18 £5  
(U18 Season tickets only available on early bird)

**FULL PRICE** EQUIVALENT PRICE PER MATCH

- Adult £185.00 £8.80
- Conc. £130.00 £6.19

\*FULL PRICE FROM 1st AUGUST  
\*\*Concessions over 65 and Students  
\*\*\*Match Day Tickets £12, Conc-£8, U18 £5

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**Manager:** Ahmet Rifat

**Coaches:** Ruben Gaspar, Jonny Georgiou, Ricky Machel

**Goalkeeping Coach:** Gavin King

**Analyst:** Michael Smith

**Kit Manager:** Pete Barker

**Charlie Grainger**

**Tyrece Briscoe**

**Toby Byron**

**Billy Cracknell**

**Jaiden Drakes-Thomes**

**Ben Frempah**

**Rhamar Garrett-Douglas**

**Andronicos Georgiou**

**Fergal Hale-Brown**

**Loic Hernandez**

**Arthur Iontton**

**Ryan Lowe**

**Zack Newton**

**Tommy Roberts**

**Ogo Obi**

**Destiny Oladipo**

**Khristopher Oti**

**Lonit Talla**

**Ayo Tanimowo**

**Bobby Webb**



**Managers:** Peter Adeniyi

**Goalkeeping Coach:** Charlie Side

**Kit Manager:** David Geddes

**Fikayo Atewologun**

**Tommy Bradford**

**Mackenzie Foley**

**Darnell Goather-Braithwaite**

**Steve Gody**

**Paris Hamilton-Downes**

**Oliver Hamstead**

**Brian Ifeanyi**

**Thomas Jackson**

**Charlie Kennett**

**Luke Read**

**Aziz Sankoh**

**Fabio Saraiva**

**Mason Saunders-Henry**

**Tom Staggs**

**Dom Vose**

#### **NEXT UP IN N12:**

Hastings United (ILP) – 09/11/2024

Tilbury (VLC) – 12/11/2024

#### **MATCH OFFICIALS**

**Referee:** Mr. Gerry Heron

**Assistants:** Mr. Ericsson Temu, Mr. Thomas Nicholls