Slimbridge Football Club



Emirates FA CUP

The Emirates FA Cup
1st Qualifying Round

PITCHING IN — PARTNERS WITH SOUTHERN FOOTBALL LEAGUE

Saturday September 3rd 2022
v Sholing



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Slimbridge
Football Club

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Sports Therapists	Tony Woodward
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Assistants	Tom Hitchings Harry Hughes
Head of Youth Development	Kevin Russell
Ground Staff	Paul Chappell Malcolm Carter David Morgan Barry Gay

Wisloe Road
Cambridge
Gloucestershire
GL2 7AF

Website: www.slimbridgeafc.co.uk
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Slimbridge Football Club is a Members Club which is run by Volunteers.

Visit Our Snack Hut by the Clubhouse for your Hot food and drink today!

Tea, Coffee, Soup	£1.00
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Bacon Cheese Burger	£3.50
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Beer, Lager, Cider, Soft drinks, Crisps, Nuts and Chocolate available in the clubhouse

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Slimbridge v Sholing

Todays Team Lineups

Lewis Adams	1	Ryan Gosney
Joe Shutt	2	Brad Targett
Ben Prictor	3	Marvin Mcclean
Myron Turner	4	Rob Flooks
Jacob Geddes	5	Dan Miller
Toby Lawrence	6	Robin Nicholls
Edji Mbunga	7	Lee Wort
Ben McLean	8	Byron Mason (C)
Ethan Dunbar	9	Dan Mason
Dylan Lewis	10	Fatah Makholufi
Marley Thomas	11	Charlie Wagstaffe
Mike Ford	12	Josh Batt
Brad Bevan	14	Ryan Cluett
Brandon Barnes	15	Conor Whiteley
Levi Francis	16	Domenico Panesar-Dower
Nathan Dennis	17	Owen Roundell
Ben Hands	18	Tomasz Gruweski
Dan Troke (GK)	19	Wayne Robinson

Referee Said Ouchene

Assistants Gregory Wentland
Mark Loughlin







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Season 2022-23

Fixtures & Results



			Opposition	Competition	Result	Att
Sat Aug 6	3:00pm	A	Tuffley Rovers	FA Cup Extra Pr	2-1	186
Sat Aug 13	**3:00pm**	**H**	**Sholing**	**League**	1-3	88
Tue Aug 16	7:45pm	A	Cinderford Town	League	1-2	108
Sat Aug 20	3:00pm	A	Flackwell Heath	FA Cup Pr	1-0	232
Sat Aug 27	3:00pm	A	Hamworthy United	League	1-1	152
Mon Aug 29	**3:00pm**	**H**	**Bristol Manor Farm**	**League**	1-1	219
Sat Sep 3	**3:00pm**	**H**	**Sholing**	**FA Cup 1Q**		
Sat Sep 10	3:00pm	A	A.F.C. Totton	FA Trophy Pr		
Sat Sep 17	3:00pm	A	Bashley	League		
Sat Oct 1	**3:00pm**	**H**	**Exmouth Town**	**League**		
Sat Oct 8	3:00pm	A	Paulton Rovers	League		
Wed Oct 12	**7:45pm**	**H**	**Evesham United**	**League**		
Sat Oct 15	3:00pm	A	A.F.C. Totton	League		
Sat Oct 22	**3:00pm**	**H**	**Tavistock AFC**	**League**		
Wed Oct 26	7:45pm	A	Willand Rovers	League		
Sat Oct 29	3:00pm	A	Wimborne Town	League		
Sat Nov 5	**3:00pm**	**H**	**Lymington Town**	**League**		
Sat Nov 12	**3:00pm**	**H**	**Bideford AFC**	**League**		
Sat Nov 19	3:00pm	A	Frome Town	League		
Wed Nov 23	**7:45pm**	**H**	**Cinderford Town**	**League**		
Sat Nov 26	**3:00pm**	**H**	**Westbury United**	**League**		
Sat Dec 3	3:00pm	A	Sholing	League		
Sat Dec 10	3:00pm	A	Larkhall Athletic	League		
Sat Dec 17	**3:00pm**	**H**	**Melksham Town**	**League**		
Mon Dec 26	**3:00pm**	**H**	**Bishops Cleeve**	**League**		
Mon Jan 2	3:00pm	A	Bristol Manor Farm	League		
Sat Jan 7	**3:00pm**	**H**	**Hamworthy United**	**League**		
Sat Jan 14	3:00pm	A	Westbury United	League		
Sat Jan 21	**3:00pm**	**H**	**Bashley**	**League**		
Sat Jan 28	3:00pm	A	Bideford AFC	League		
Sat Feb 4	**3:00pm**	**H**	**Paulton Rovers**	**League**		
Sat Feb 11	3:00pm	A	Exmouth Town	League		
Sat Feb 18	**3:00pm**	**H**	**Larkhall Athletic**	**League**		
Sat Feb 25	3:00pm	A	Melksham Town	League		
Sat Mar 4	3:00pm	A	Evesham United	League		
Sat Mar 18	**3:00pm**	**H**	**A.F.C. Totton**	**League**		
Sat Mar 25	3:00pm	A	Tavistock AFC	League		
Sat Apr 1	**3:00pm**	**H**	**Willand Rovers**	**League**		
Sat Apr 8	**3:00pm**	**H**	**Frome Town H**	**League**		
Mon Apr 10	3:00pm	A	Bishops Cleeve	League		
Sat Apr 15	**3:00pm**	**H**	**Wimborne Town**	**League**		
Sat Apr 22	3:00pm	A	Lymington Town	League		

Southern League
Division One South

		P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1	Sholing	4	4	0	0	11	2	9	12
2	Hamworthy United	4	3	1	0	6	3	3	10
3	Exmouth Town	4	3	0	1	6	2	4	9
4	Frome Town	4	2	1	1	8	4	4	7
5	Tavistock AFC	4	2	1	1	3	2	1	7
6	Wimborne Town	4	2	0	2	9	5	4	6
7	Paulton Rovers	4	2	0	2	9	6	3	6
8	Evesham United	4	2	0	2	5	3	2	6
9	AFC Totton	4	2	0	2	4	4	0	6
10	Bashley	4	2	0	2	3	3	0	6
11	Bishops Cleeve	4	2	0	2	6	7	-1	6
12	Melksham Town	4	2	0	2	6	10	-4	6
13	Willand Rovers	3	1	2	0	4	3	1	5
14	Westbury United	4	1	1	2	4	6	-2	4
15	Cinderford Town	4	1	1	2	6	10	-4	4
16	Bideford AFC	4	0	3	1	3	4	-1	3
17	Bristol Manor Farm	4	0	3	1	3	4	-1	3
18	Slimbridge	4	0	2	2	4	7	-3	2
19	Larkhall Athletic	4	0	1	3	3	10	-7	1
20	Lymington Town	3	0	0	3	2	10	-8	0

Swans On The Road

Up Next

Saturday 10th September 2022 3:00pm

FA Trophy Qualifying Round



AFC Totton

The Snows Stadium

Salisbury Road, Totton

Southampton

SO40 2RW

Saturday 17th September 2022 3:00pm

Southern League Division One South



Bashley

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Bashley

New Milton

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Sholing
Club History

The Boatmen have a long but fragmented history, running teams from the Woolston Works as early as 1884, when they are recorded as being refused permission by the Hants & Dorset FA to introduce fresh players as substitutes at half-time. In March 1887 they were finalists in the first Portsmouth Challenge Cup, beaten 1-0 by Portsmouth Association Club. The Club were only beaten twice in 16 games that year (goal tally 72-6) and won the last Hants & Dorset Challenge Cup before these Associations split. Woolston Works won the first ever Hampshire Senior Cup Final in 1888, beating Winchester 2-0. There was some controversy that year concerning Woolston's professional attitude, which was infamously referred to as "Kesson's Boots'. Andover were beaten in an earlier round by Woolston, in which a Glasgow - based player called J. Kesson played a prominent part. Andover protested that Kesson should be disqualified on the grounds of residency - although he had played for Woolston Works earlier that season, he had since moved back to Glasgow. Woolstons appeal rested on the fact that Kesson had left several of his clothing items at his lodgings in Woolston, and this should be interpreted as his intention to return. The Hampshire FA upheld the appeal and allowed Kesson to play. Re-forming after World War 1 as Thornycrofts (Woolston), they turned professional and were admitted into the Hampshire County League from 1920/21 to 1925/26. In 1920/21 Thornycrofts reached the FA Cup First Round proper, meeting first Division Burnley at Fratton Park, and held them to a 0-0 draw, before losing 5-0 in the replay. Burnley were in the middle of a 30-game unbeaten run and went on to win the first Division Championship. Thornycrofts Woolston re-formed in 1947 but were only able to keep going until 1952. The Club were re-formed as Vosper Thornycroft FC in 1960 and joined the Southampton Junior League.

After several successful years, Vospers were promoted to the Hampshire League Division 3 in 1991. The following season they were promoted to Division 2.

1997/98 saw Vospers as Hampshire Division 2 Runners-up and Hampshire Intermediate Cup Winners. In 2001/02 Vospers won the Southampton Senior Cup.

2002/03 Vospers were re-named as VT FC (after the parent company) and saw the Club as Runners-up in the Southampton Senior Cup.

2003/4 saw VT as Hampshire Premier League Champions, Southampton Senior Cup Winners, and promotion to the Sydenhams Wessex League Division 1.

2005/06 VT Reserves won the Southampton Senior Cup at St Mary's Stadium which gave the club their 3rd victory in 5 years.

2006/07 was a great season for the club. The first team finished in third place and the reserves finished runners-up in Combination 1 and they also won the Southampton Senior Cup again. The Club's 4th victory in 6 years.

2007/2008 The 1st team were Runners-up to Totton in the Premier League and the Reserves won 3 out of 4 trophies. They are the Sydenhams (Wessex) Combination 1 League Champions, the Southampton Senior Cup Champions (for the third consecutive year) and the Sydenhams (Wessex) Combination Cup Champions. They missed out on the Hampshire Intermediate Cup by losing to Nursling in the semi-final which was the ONLY defeat they suffered all season. An achievement to be proud of.

2008/09 was equally a very successful season with the first team again Runners-up in the Wessex Premier, this time to Poole Town. They were Wessex League Cup Winners with a close 2-1 victory over Hamworthy United. Runners-up in the Hampshire Senior Cup with a narrow 1-0 defeat against Fleet Town. Reserves again won Wessex Combination 1 and the U18 Youth team made a clean sweep winning four trophies i.e The League, The League Cup, The Hampshire FA Youth Cup and the Echo Floodlit Cup....what a great season.

2009/10 In our very first season in the Zamaretto Southern League we finished a creditable 4th (play-off position) in the South & West Division and finished Runners-up in the Red Insure League Cup after going so close and finally losing on penalties to Cambridge City. The Reserves regained the Southampton Senior Cup at St Mary's defeating Team Solent 2-0....the sixth time in the last ten years the Club has won it.

The Club changed their name in July 2010 to Sholing FC after the parent company VT Group were no longer in existence.

2010/11 In only their second season in the Southern League South & West, the 1st team reached an incredible 2nd place, only 2 points behind AFC Totton. Also, Hampshire Senior Cup Finalists at St Marys losing 3-1 to AFC Totton. The Reserves gained an incredible Double by winning the Wessex Combination League and League Cup in its Final year.

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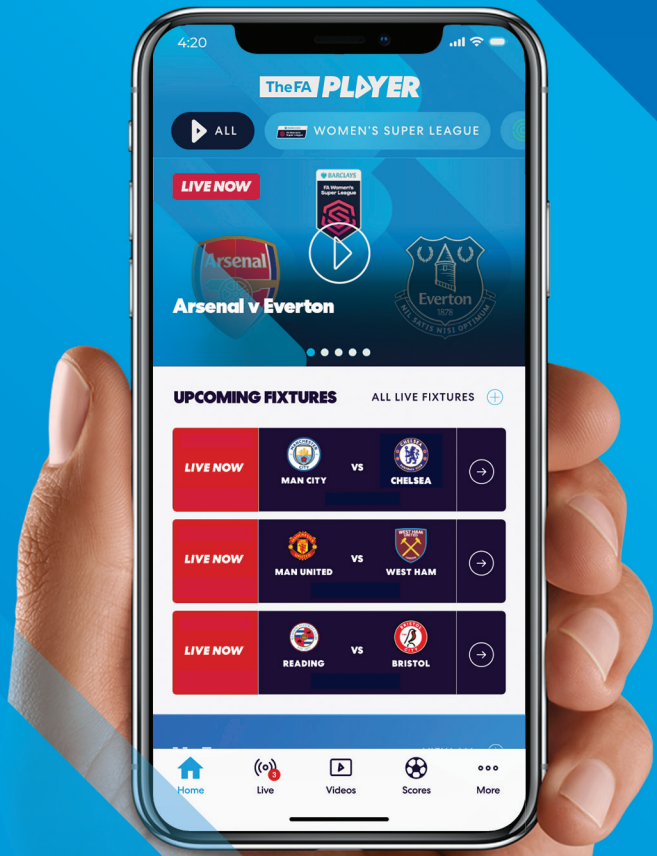

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2011/12 For the third season on the trot we once again reached the playoffs only to fall at the first hurdle by a 1-0 away defeat by Gosport. The reserves copied last year's achievement by winning the League and League Cup in the newly formed Wyvern League.

2012/13 Despite being bottom of the league just before Christmas, the first team went on an incredible run in the second half of the season and finished 7th in the Southern League South & West. The Reserves once again won the Wyvern League, this time going unbeaten the whole season. The club made the difficult decision to voluntarily drop out of the Southern League South & West (step 4) and into the Wessex League Premier (step 5). With the focus of the club turning to developing the Silverlake Arena, we didn't want to financially extend ourselves and sink into debt.

2013/14 Back in the Wessex League Premier Division saw the club playing lots of old local rivals and the first team got off to a storming start to the season and it wasn't to be until February when we were first defeated. However, due to terrible weather & cup commitments, the club barely played in January & February, meaning a huge backlog of fixtures in the final weeks of the season. Despite having to play 20 games in 30 days, including NINE successive away games, Sholing won the League with 104 points and a goal difference of +105. The Reserves made it a hat-trick of Wyvern League titles in the most thrilling way, scoring a goal in injury time in the last game of the season, to deny Portchester the title. They also won the Southampton Senior Cup at St Mary's. Of course, the FA Vase win will be what most people will remember from this season, the greatest honour in the club's history. Back in October as we faced Winchester in the 1st round, no one was dreaming of Wembley, but as the rounds were ticked off, we started to get the feeling that this would be our year. So, on the 10th May 2014 at the home of football, Wembley Stadium, backed by over 3,000 fans, Marvin Mclean scored the only goal and Byron Mason & Dave Diaper lifted the Vase. In a whirlwind of activity that followed, the team paraded the FA Vase in front of the Southampton FC fans at St Mary's, were given an official reception by the Mayor of Southampton and appeared on both local TV stations. After 15 years in charge of the first team, Dave Diaper handed over the reins to Dave Fear & Mick Marsh, to concentrate on the Ground redevelopment (for which the club

has kindly received backing and grants from Sport England & the FA to build a new clubhouse and 3G pitch). We also said a fond goodbye to players Marc Diaper, Tyronne Bowers & Lee Bright, who all decided to "retire at the top" after Wembley. After 37 years as Secretary and then becoming Vice President we lost Arthur Fox to cancer, but he achieved his dream by attending the Wembley final.

2014/15 Club was granted promotion back into the Southern League South & West division. After 21 matches in charge Mick Marsh & Dave Fear stepped down from their managerial role leaving Chairman Dave Diaper to step back into the fray alongside Stuart Hussey. Sholing finished in 17th position having been in that position for 32 weeks. Sholing reached the semi-final Russell-Cotes cup and the final of the Hampshire Senior Cup losing out 3-0 to Gosport Borough at Fratton Park. Ground grading issues saw Sholing relegated back to the Wessex League. The Reserves much like the 1st team had a change of management part way through the season with Martin Tongs stepping up from U18's to take charge. The Wyvern title eluded them this season losing out to AFC Portchester and had to settle for runners up and the two cup competitions saw them runners up again to Petersfield Town in the League Cup but were successful in the John Stimpson Memorial Shield beating AFC Totton.

2015/16 Following a ground grading issue Sholing returned to the Sydenhams Wessex League. Sholing welcomed Darren Burdle into the coaching staff. A remarkable season for Sholing as ten players from within the under 18 ranks made their first team appearances something that has never happened before. Cup disappointments meant the season was all about the League and Sholing finished the season Runners Up to Salisbury losing one home League game which was our first game against Moneyfields the only team to do the League double over us. Dan Mason was pipped by former Sholing striker Sam Wilson on the final day of the season to deny Dan being the League's leading scorer.

2016/17: Behind the scenes saw another change in management within the Development side with Iain Calder Steve Ross & Steve Blackburn taking over the reins. Finishing 4th in the League and reaching S/F of JSMS & ¼ Final of SDFA Sen Cup. Sholing FC were rocked in Dec 16 with the sudden death of Coach Darren Burdle aged 50. Sholing FC finished season 3rd with Dan Mason again being the

leading marksman. Sholing completed a cup double winning the Sydenhams Wessex League Cup then 52 hrs later lifted the SDFA Senior Cup for the 9th time at St Mary's.

2017/18: The season like last season saw changes in management with Development manager Iain Calder stepping up to 1st team coach. Steve Blackburn & Curtis Osbourne along with Steve Ross took on the Development role and took the U18's to the 1st Round of the FA Youth Cup. Steve & Curtis left the club midseason with Patrick McGonigle and Steve Terry doubling up their roles with U18'S and Development with Steve Ross. The 1st team finished third in the Sydenhams Wessex League and failed to defend both trophies losing out in the semi-finals in both competitions. The Development side finished mid-table with many U18's stepping up to the Development side. The U18's won the HCY League Cup and a number of the U18'S featured in 1st team games.

2018/19: Sholing won the Sydenhams Wessex League title with 8 games remaining of the season & promotion back to Bet Victor Southern League South a winning double was achieved beating Christchurch to win the Russell-Cotes Cup for the 1st time in their history. The Reserves finished runners-up in The Wyvern Combination League Premier Division with the U18's losing out on penalties to Moneyfields in HCYL League Cup Final.

2019/20: After a slow start in the league, the Boatmen picked up form after Christmas and quickly climbed from the bottom 3 to 10th place and were looking good for a possible late run for the play-offs, before the season was sadly halted by the Coronavirus outbreak. Sholing created club history by reaching the First-round proper of the FA Trophy for the first time, losing out in the tie to a very good Bath City side. Off the pitch, the new clubhouse was opened in December by James Beattie. Also, plans have been approved for a new changing room building and we secured new naming rights for the ground to be called the Mackoy Stadium. The Reserves were in 3rd placed when the season was curtailed. During the lockdown we lost club stalwart Ray Tyrrell a club legend who will be sorely missed.

2020/21: The club finally built a new changing room building and carried out a host of stadium improvements over a very busy summer. In what must be a first for the Boatmen, we lifted silverware in October, winning & retaining the Russell Cotes Cup,

which was held over from the previous cancelled season. More history was made in the FA Cup when the club reached the 4th Qualifying Round for the first time where we were narrowly defeated by Torquay United. Yet again tragedy hit the club when we lost 36yr old supporter James Goodway & then Club Photographer Ray Routledge. The season again was curtailed, and no further games were played. For our Reserves they formed part of the new U23 League in the revamped Hampshire Combination Development League not making a great start but after Lockdown managed to get back on track and were able to finish the season in 3rd place.

2021/22: Our first complete season since 2 curtailed Covid seasons. A mixed season saw us win the club of the month twice however it was our league form that cost us a play-off place, but the season finished with us in 7th place. Our U23 side went from strength to strength under Sam Scott & Matt Meadus & they guing days before taking up refereeing. Terry teamed up with the 1st team in 2016.



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Sholing
Player Profiles

Josh Batt: -- D.O.B. 29/07/2003 – Josh joined the Boatmen in 2021 following his return from playing in America for LJUS having previously joined Hamble Club

Ryan Cluett --- D.O.B. 16/11/2001 --- Ryan was released by Southampton FC Academy & can play full back or wide on the wing.

Lochlan Colquhoun -- D.O.B.31/01/2002 – Defender Lochln made his debut 2021/22 Lochlan is currently dual signed with Blackfield & Langley

Jake Cope ---- D.O.B. 15/09/00 --- Jake was previously with AFC Bournemouth & Poole Town joined the Boatmen 2021/22

Luke Deacon — D.O.B. 09/07/01 — Luke is a product of Eastleigh Academy and was 1st choice goalkeeper at Hamble Club currently dual signed at Fareham Town. Luke signed for the Boatmen in March 2020

Rob Flooks – D.O.B. 22/07/1994 Rob came through the youth ranks then joined Gosport Borough 2012 has also played for Winchester City AFC Totton

Dean Frampton – D.O.B. 24/12/2003 Dean has been part of Sholing Education Academy made his debut in 2021/22 also played for Millbrook. This season Dean is dual signed with Blackfield & Langley.

Ryan Gosney – D.O.B. 13/03/93 – goalkeeper joined the club in 2014/15 from Winchester City previously with Follands. Made over 300 appearances and kept over 100 clean sheets.

Nathan Gray --- D.O.B. 08/09/92 – Nathan joined the club in 2021 to help support the U23 side previously with Bush Hill Brockenhurst & QK Southampton currently dual signed with Blackfield & Langley

Stuart Green — D.O.B. 07/07/90— Stuart signed from Bognor Regis in 2019 his previous clubs include AFC Totton, Winchester City, Eastleigh, Salisbury, Alresford Town, Romsey Town and came through Poole Town Development & Sholing Development. Stuart has also become an author writing his 1st book Boom to the Moon.

Mackenzie Hare – D.O.B. 23/12/2004 Macca has come through our youth ranks and is our U18 keeper. Had a spell with Totton & Eling in 2021/22

Michael Kurn --- D.O.B. 26/09/89 --- Michael has joined the goalkeeping coaching staff and plays for Sholing U23's

Fatah (Sammi) Makhloufi – D.O.B. 06/04/1997 – Sammi joined the Boatmen in 2021/22 from Blackfield & Langley

Byron Mason -- D.O.B. 01/03/87 The Boatmen's FA Vase winning captain Byron had a brief spell at Gosport Borough but returned after 2 months Byron has now made over 650 appearances and scored 115 goals. Byron has also joined the backroom staff as a joint assistant manager.

Daniel Mason -- D.O.B. 05/06/92 – Dan re-joined the club following a season at Folland Sports 2013-14 and was last season's leading scorer for the club. Dan is closing in on 500 appearances for the club.

Marvin McLean - D.O.B 20/08/87 - Plays wide midfield and progressed through the reserves to become a folk hero at Sholing scoring the only goal in the FA Vase Final at Wembley. Marvin has reverted to a new role of left back and has played over 700 appearances a club record

Daniel Miller – D.O.B. 02/04/94 - Centre Half who has moved up through the Sholing youth system. Dan has established himself as no1 in the centre back role. Dan has made over 400 appearances so far. Dan collected his first ever caution at Wembley coming on as a sub for Pete Castle in the FA Vase Final in 2014.

Robin Nicholls --- D.O.B. 27/09/90 -- The experienced central midfielder joined Sholing from AFC Totton in October 2020 Robin was also dual signed with Lymington Town for whom he played in the Russell Cotes Cup defeat to Sholing. Robin has played at higher levels in the past for Brentford & Weymouth, amongst other clubs.

Domenico Panesar-Dower – D.O.B. 15/02/1998 – Dom joins the Boatmen this season from Brockenhurst Previously played for Weymouth, Poole Town, Dorchester Town, Winchester City, Bideford AFC, Aylesbury United, Portland United, Blackfield & Langley.

Owen Roundell – D.O.B. 23/03/1997 – Another product of our youth set up made over 220 games before leaving to join Gosport Borough and a brief spell at AFC Portchester before returning in 2021/22.

Bradley Targett – D.O.B. 14/05/01 Bradley is another player that has come through the Sholing youth ranks and made his 1st team debut away to Alresford Town four seasons ago at 16. Bradley has made nearly 150 appearances.

Charlie Wagstaffe — D.O.B. 06/07/98 — Charlie joined in Sholing for 20/21, moving up the road from Hamble Club where he'd been a fixture in their team for the past 2 years. A technically gifted midfielder with an eye for a spectacular goal.

Connor Whiteley – D.O.B. 31/05/98 -- Another former Southampton Academy graduate, who has played mostly for Bashley in forward roles, hitting 35 goals in 86 Wessex League games for the New Forest club. Has been one of the most exciting players in local football in recent seasons and is more than ready for a step up in quality in the Southern League

Lee Wort –D.O.B. 18/08/1991 – Lee another product of our youth set up is now in his 3rd spell at Portsmouth Road. A member of the FA Vase winners in 2014 Lee had trials with Accrington Stanley before joining Gosport Borough. Lee returned to Sholing in 2016 and in 2020 joined AFC Portchester. Lee is nearing 500 appearances

Sholing
Staff Profiles

Dave Diaper - joined the club as manager in season 1999/00 from B.A.T. Former Southampton Schools and Hampshire Representative Player. Previous clubs played for; Cadnam, BHC (IOW), Pirelli, AC Delco, Otterbourne, Netley Vics and B.A.T. Coached Hampshire Senior squad 2002, managed Hampshire U21 2002, Otterbourne and B.A.T. 2014 won Wessex League and FA Vase. Following the resignation of Mick Marsh Dave Diaper once again took up the managerial reins in Oct 2014. Dave has now reached an incredible landmark 1166 games in charge during his twenty-three years at Portsmouth Road at the start of this 20022/23 season.

Marc Diaper – After 14 seasons with the Boatmen Marc played his last game at Wembley in the FA Vase win and retired. However, Marc was talked into joining AFC Totton. Marc re-joined the club in a coaching capacity in 2016 and has now progressed to the role of Assistant Manager.

Jack Smith — Jack made 135 appearances for the Boatmen left in 2018/19 season to join Hamble Club and has now returned as an Assistant Coach.

Terry Miller — Coaching staff Terry's playing career saw him play in goal for BAT Sports, Winchester Castle and The Clump before a broken leg finished his playing days before taking up refereeing. Terry teamed up with the 1st team in 2016.

Sholing

Previous Fixtures

Home

Tuesday 12th April 2022
Southern League Div One South
Slimbridge 3-0 Sholing

Away

Saturday 30th November 2019
Betvictor Southern Div One South
Sholing 3-1 Slimbridge

Saturday 26th September 2020
Southern League Div One South
Sholing 0-2 Slimbridge

Saturday 25th September 2021
Southern League Div One South
Sholing 2-1 Slimbridge

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Swans History

In The Beginning

The Gloucestershire village of Slimbridge is world renowned for its Bird Sanctuary, but much hard work has gone into making Slimbridge better known in football circles.

The Club's history can be traced back to the 1899/1900 season, when the team were playing in local football at various venues in and around the village. A gap in the records suggests there may have been a couple of seasons when no games were played, and thus, officially, the Club's centenary was celebrated in 2002/03.

For the next forty-odd years the Club were predominantly members of the Stroud and District League with varying degrees of success and failure, except for a period between 1960 and 1968 when they were in the Gloucester Northern Senior League.
It was not until 1951 that the current ground at Wisloe Road (Now renamed as Thornhill Park) became the club's home, and it subsequently became the legal property of the club after former player, and ex-Chairman of the club, Evi Thornhill, bequeathed the land to the Club in his Will, with the Club becoming legal owners in 1960. It was to prove an incredibly valuable treasure in future years.

Point Of Collapse

By 1988, the club had fallen on hard times, but fortunately, a handful of committee members led by Gordon King and Gordon Tudor kept the Club afloat. The following season local businessman Paul Chappell arrived. The Club was stabilised and construction of new changing facilities, to County League standard, were completed. Paul Chappell was to remain a vital part of the club until his retirement from his duties in 2020.

Start Of A New Reign

As playing standards improved, 2000 saw the completion of the building of a long awaited Social Club in an area of the ground that in it's old life had housed a cowshed. John Mack, a successful local entrepreneur, joined the club as Chairman, and he remains a committed supporter of the club to this day as Club President. In the summer of 2001, Doug Gray was appointed Manager, and the club began a period of upward momentum.

The team achieved a Runners-up spot in their first season in the Gloucester County League, and were accepted into the Hellenic League. Hellenic Division One West was won by an eleven point margin in 2002/03. A creditable fourth place finish was achieved in the Hellenic Premier League in 2003/04.
In a marvellous season the club also claimed the Hellenic 'Norman Matthews' Floodlit Cup and the G.F.A. Challenge Trophy.

Arrival Of Floodlights

Floodlights arrived at the ground in the summer of 2003. A pre-season visit from Conference side Forest Green Rovers on 22nd July, produced a then ground record attendance of 427 to witness the inaugural game under lights at Wisloe Road.

A few weeks later on Sunday 24th August, that ground attendance record was beaten at a Bank Holiday Hellenic Premier Division fixture that was part of the 2003/04 annual 'Ground Hop' weekend. Local rivals Shortwood United provided the opposition in front of a crowd of 525.

Season 2004/05 again saw a fourth place finish in the Hellenic Premier. The club also made their first appearance in the F.A. Vase, which resulted in a run to the third round proper before a 2-1 extra time defeat at Western League side Backwell United.

In February 2005, Gray stood down after nearly four seasons at the helm of the club.

The club started season 2005/06 under newly appointed Manager Doug Foxwell. A first entry into the F.A. Cup saw a visit from Wessex League side Wimborne Town. A 1-0 defeat did not dampen the sense of occasion on the first day of the season. A second successful run in the F.A. Vase came to an end in the Third Round Proper, with a 3-1 defeat at South Midland Premier, Welwyn Garden City.
After a record-breaking 64 game season, the team achieved a fifth place finish in the Hellenic Premier, and the club also won the Hellenic 'Norman Matthews' Floodlit Cup and the GFA Challenge Trophy, both for the second time in three seasons.

Reserves Make Headway

The Club's Reserve side were also making progress - After two successive third place finishes in the Stroud and District League First Division, season 2005/06 saw them finally win the title and with it, promotion to the Gloucester Northern Senior League Division Two. This was the same League title that the first team won in season 1998/99 which proved the springboard for five successive first team promotions.

Rise To New Heights

Season 2006/07 proved to be the most successful in the Club's history to date, with both the First Team and Reserve side recording League and Cup doubles, with the added bonus of record-breaking F.A.Cup and Vase runs for the senior side.

In the F.A. Cup, a five match run from the Extra-Preliminary Round finished at Merthyr Tydfil in the Third Qualifying Round. Along the way there were memorable wins against two other Southern Premier sides, 2-1 at Yate Town and 3-1 at home to Chippenham Town.

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It was six matches in the F.A. Vase before defeat was tasted, the run ending in the Fifth Round Proper at home to the eventual winners, Truro City.

In the Hellenic Premier Division, bad weather, which led to a record number of postponements during the subsequently extended season, led to half a seasons fixtures being played in the final two months. A tremendous effort saw the Club bring the Championship Shield to Wisloe Road, the winning margin being three points over second placed North Leigh.

There was a rousing performance in the G.F.A. Trophy Final against Almondsbury Town. A 3-1 victory not only retained the Trophy, but recorded a third success in four seasons in that competition.

The Reserve side had an early success in the Gloucester Northern Senior League Cup with a 2-0 win against Division One Tuffley Rovers. This saw confidence rise and they went on to break a Gloucestershire Northern Senior League record in winning Division Two with a Played 30, Won 30 record.

Promotion To The Southern League

As a result of winning the league after an inspiring final day victory, and the upgrade to the ground facilities at Wisloe Road, the club were promoted into the BGB Southern League Division One Midlands for Season 2007/08, however, there was a twist to come in the tale.

Return To A New Beginning

On July 10th 2007 the club decided not to take up the promotion, and effectively, the first team took over the position in the pyramid occupied by the reserve team, which was disbanded.

The First Team reverted back to the Gloucester Northern Senior League. This meant a severe upheaval in the club both on and off the field with the manager Doug Foxwell and several senior players moving on the pastures new.

However, a loyal band of players stayed on including James Cole, who over as player manager with assistance from long term club captain Leon Sterling to begin the next stage of the club's journey.

Climb Back Up The Ladder

Four promotions followed as the club regained their previous status. James Cole handed over to Leon Sterling, who moved into the Manager's role, with Leon joined as Assistant Manager by long time Slimbridge stalwart Freddy Ward. The two guided the side to three top six finishes in their first three seasons back in the Hellenic Premier.

Switching Leagues

After the completion of the 2012-13 season, the Swans applied for a transfer to the Toolstation Western Premier League in an effort to reduce prohibitive travelling costs, a move which was approved by the FA in the Summer of 2013.

Return To The Southern League

After two seasons in the Toolstation Western Premier League, a third place finish at the end of the 2014/15 season gave the Swans a second opportunity to return to the Southern Football League. This time the club accepted the offer and took their place in the South and West Division, finishing a credible 18th in their first season, the highest level the club had ever achieved at that time in their history. Prior to the commencement of that campaign, John Mack had stepped back from Chairman duties and his position was taken up by Barry Gay.

Welcome To Thornhill Park

At the start of the 2016-17 season, and prior to our pre-season friendly fixture with neighbours Forest Green Rovers, the football ground in Wisloe Road was formally renamed to Thornhill Park in recognition of the marvellous gift we received from Evil Thornhill 46 years earlier.

Evi's son, Tony and his late wife Margaret were on hand to cut the ceremonial ribbon, and Tony made a short heartfelt speech about how much the renaming meant to him and the entire Thornhill family, and how honoured they were that the football club had recognised their father in this way.

Onwards and Upwards

A difficult two seasons of struggle at a higher level saw the eventual departure of Leon Sterling as Manager, with Freddy Ward stepping up to the plate, assisted by local footballing legend Lee Driver-Dickerson. With Freddy then stepping aside to concentrate of his last few years of playing having steadied the Swans' ship, 'Drive' took over the reins as Manager of the first team.

The Club's previous ground attendance record was smashed on 4th February 2017, when 898 fans saw the side suffer a 3-0 defeat to Hereford FC, who were working their way back up the league pyramid following their reformation after the collapse of Hereford United

The last 2 years have seen an incredible expansion of the football club– the establishment of a thriving Youth setup at Under 18 level, and the resurrection of the Reserve side has seen Slimbridge AFC make great strides as a club.

Prior to the Covid suspension of football in March 2020, the Under 18s and the Reserves were top of their respective leagues, while the first team were sitting in 12th place in the

Southern League Division One South, the highest placing in the history of the football club. Although the FA has made the season's results null and void, they have been officially added to club statistics and all appearances and goals will stand in our records as a permanent tribute to all who represented the club in a fantastic season in the strangest of all campaigns

The Club has gained a great local reputation both on and off the pitch for looking after players and developing them in their careers - Already some of those previously with the club in the last 2 seasons have moved to Conference South level to ply their trade.

It is a tribute to the committed and very talented team of coaches and managers in place at all levels of the club, that the future is very bright indeed for the Swans…

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Slimbridge
Staff Profiles

Tom Speers
Manager
Tom took over part way through last season stepping up from the assistant role. He has bags of experience as a player having previously played for the Swans between 2010 and 2013.

Since retiring as a player in 2013 Tom has worked for the AC Milan Academy in Sydney before moving to Auckland where he worked firstly as assistant manager at top flight Eastern Suburbs then manager at North Shore. Currently a OFA B / UEFA B Licence holder and looking to take his A license in the near future. A very popular and well respected figure around the club, bringing a professional attitude to the dressing room.

Tom Deakin
Coach
Deaks joined Slimbridge at the start of last season as first team coach. He arrived from Forest Green Rovers after 2 years with the academy and 14 years in total having also coached at Brimscombe and Thrupp working with both the first team and development sides.

Adam Coyle
Coach
Adam is a long term servant with the club joining from the county youth scene to set up and manage the successful Under 18's youth team and more recently managing the reserve side. Has bags of coaching experience and brings a new dimension to the first team.

Tony Woodward
Sports Therapist
Tony has been with us for very many years and is a popular figure in the dugout. Keeps threatening to retire but keeps turning up, Tony is also a qualified football referee.

Slimbridge
Player Profiles

Lewis Adams
Goalkeeper
Lewis progressed through our U/18s side and has become a very capable Southern League player. Good shot stopper who has made over 100 appearances in the number one jersey.

Dan Troke
Goalkeeper
Strong talented young up and coming U/18s goalkeeper pushing Lewis hard for a starting place this year.

Ben Hands
Defender
A strong lad at the heart of the defence also plays in a defensive midfield role and capable of chipping in a few goals. Previous clubs include Longlevens and Cinderford Town.

Nathan Dennis
Defender
Signed from County League Frampton 12 months ago and made a huge impact in the central defence. Big old school style defender that puts himself about at both ends of the pitch.

Toby Lawrence
Defender
Former Cheltenham Town U18s player in his second year with the Swans in the Southern League having had a good season in the heart of the defence.

Jacob Geddes
Defender
Former Tuffley Rovers player, is a no nonsense defender already showing his solidity and impressing amongst the rest of the squad

Zac Mitchell
Defender
Signed on a dual registration from Chippenham Town. Zak is a strong centre-back who is calm and excellent with the ball at his feet

Ben Prictor
Defender
Experienced Southern and Hellenic League defender in his third spell with the club after a spell with Evesham last season, likes getting forward.

Myron Turner
Midfield
A very popular member of the squad and among the supporters here a Thornhill Park. Returns for his sixth season with the Swans having previously played for Longlevens.

Michael Ford
Midfield
A very solid player who is able to play in defence or midfield. Had a spell playing and coaching in Iceland in 2020, but returns to the Swans for his fourth season.

Ben McLean
Midfield
Local lad formally with Birmingham City as a youngster looking to continue to bolster the Swans midfield this season. Very good passer of the ball and can strike from anywhere around the box.

Levi Francis
Midfield
Former Swindon Town academy captain joined the Swans ahead of the upcoming season. The midfielder has impressed with his attitude and technical ability.

Joe Shutt
Midfield
Joe is a highly energetic winger who has already fitted in really well with the rest of the boys having joined in preseason from Tuffley Rovers

Marley Thomas
Midfield
Returning to the Swans for a third spell. The pacy winger is fans favourite and looking to rekindle his goal scoring touch after spells away at Evesham United and Cinderford Town.

Romaine Campbell
Midfield
Another former U18/s and reserve team player looking to break into the first team this season.

Liam Harper
Midfield
An attacking player who has progressed through the ranks at the club captaining both the U18/s and reserve sides.

Edjija Mbunga
Striker
Pacey striker who can be a real handful in and around the penalty area.

Ethan Dunbar
Striker
Another young player who caught the manager's eye having progressed through our U/18s. Spent last year away at Longlevens and returns more hungry than ever to step up to Southern League level. Ethan has plenty of pace and will further strengthen our attack.

Dylan Lewis
Striker
Dylan has joined the Swans from Bristol City. The exciting forward has already impressed and will be a great addition to the squad

Brad Bevan
Striker
Former Gloucester City U/23s and Fairford Town player Brad Bevan joins us ahead of this season. The young attacker has impressed with his eye for goal and attitude and will be a welcome squad member

Jack Smith
Striker
Member of the current U18/s team who has impressed during preseason and has a good future ahead of him with the Swans.

Brandon Barnes
Striker
Experienced striker who has scored many gaols for whoever he has played for. Started out with Swindon Town, Bristol City and Southampton academies. Played for Bitton and Chippenham Town then 5 successful years in New Zealand and Australia before returning to the UK with Weston Super-Mare.

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