



Dear Players, Parents, Managers and Coaches

September 2011

Welcome everyone to the new footballing season!

Eight years on from when the Club was first founded we now have 60+ regular volunteers covering 20 teams, playing in 3 leagues, made up of 280+ enthusiastic boys and girls who are committed to playing for, and representing the community of Kings Hill. A special welcome to all of you who are new to the Club and to our two brand new squads - the Under 6's and the Under 8's Rangers.

Those of you who have ventured to the North Pole pub through the woods for a summer evening pint or a Sunday lunch will have noticed the work in progress at Heath Farm. The bare earth landscaping has been transformed in the last few months into acres of lush green grass as the new pitches take hold. This is going to be a major landmark in the Club's history and will lay the foundations for the continued growth of our Club. We will have facilities that will be the envy of football clubs throughout Kent. Further updates on Heath Farm will follow once agreement of the future management of the facilities has been reached by the full Parish Council. The Club are very thankful to them and Liberty for the support and funding of the proposed new facilities.

We are also grateful for the incredible generosity of our sponsors who back our teams in a variety of ways including paying for new kit, balls, training aids and the Soccer Elite coaching sessions. Superb raffle prizes always appear for our end of season Fun Day and Liberty continues to offer the Kings Hill Avenue pitches to us free of charge and maintain them throughout the season. Our sponsors' support is greatly appreciated and contributes enormously to our success. It also keeps costs down for parents. We are one of the best supported local football clubs and we naturally hope that our sponsors' kindness and generosity will continue for years to come. A couple of our teams are currently looking for a new sponsor so if you know of a local business that might be interested in becoming a team sponsor please get in touch via the club website.

We hit another landmark this year as the founding Kings Hill team that was formed way back in 2003 made the leap into Under 18's football with all the challenges that brings. We hope that over the next couple of years we will be able to keep the nucleus of the side together, subject to University and work commitments, and see them progress into Open Age adult football. Being able to have home grown teams at every single age group from Under 6's to Open Age football and beyond that to the Veterans will be a major achievement for our Club.

Contrast the Under 18's with the new Under 6's squad that has joined the Club this season. Some are following their older brothers and sisters but others are joining the Club for the first time. They will be coached as a development squad playing solely for pleasure and will be eased into competitive football slowly and carefully and, most importantly, at a pace that matches their ability and enthusiasm. After 2 years of development, our Under 8's have just started to play in a friendly league where results and tables are not published so that they focus on playing rather than competing. That ethos is one that the Club is committed to, especially for our youngest players and we apply it through our streaming policy where at every age group, wherever possible, players are allocated each season to the level that best matches their ability. The Club's aim is to ensure that players enjoy their football without the pressure of playing outside their comfort zone. The players



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understand and accept that – often it is the parents who struggle especially if they perceive that their child is being “demoted”. That is never the case and not what the streaming policy is about, nor are we creating first teams and reserves. Children develop at different speeds and in different ways and we feel obligated to build a playing and coaching framework that matches their development. Please help the Club to help your children enjoy their football at whatever level their capability happens to be. The Club’s ethos and streaming policy can be found on the Club website www.kingshillfc.org. Please remember that if you have any queries or concerns about team decisions during the season, in the first instance they should be discussed with your team coaches; communication is to be encouraged so please don’t defer discussing issues until the end of the season only then for it to be escalated to the Executive, often too late.

Our approach is fully endorsed by the FA who will be introducing some dramatic changes to junior football, possibly from next year onwards. Research shows that moving too quickly into 11 aside and competitive football actually undermines the youngsters’ ability to learn, limits their skills development and curtails their enjoyment of the game. It’s obvious really – in a 5 or 7 aside game a player will touch the ball far more and get more involved in play than in an 11 aside game. So the FA’s intention is to move to a phased approach that moves players by age group through 5, 7 and 9 aside football with 11 aside competitive matches not being played until 13 years old. They are also considering moving to calendar year age groups rather than school based age groups. This is a national initiative, closely mirroring other successful European countries such as Holland, which along with the leagues we are monitoring and will let you know more when things become clearer.

Despite this, the need to compete, the will to win, to gain promotion and the desire to play at the highest level possible is a basic instinct of every player. We have some very talented players coming though in our younger teams and it is our responsibility as a Club to give them the opportunities to challenge themselves against the best teams. We have begun to explore the possibility of joining the Kent Youth League next season, not the easiest of tasks but with Heath Farm a reality we feel we are in a good position to make this transition.

Whilst the Exec gets on with next season’s challenges, our teams can get on with enjoying the football. This coming season is one of great promise and expectation with much needing to be done behind the scenes to put in place the conditions for even better seasons to come. This requires lots of hard work. The Executive Committee is a very small team for the challenges the Club faces and more help is always welcome. We currently have a vacancy for a Vice Chairman and volunteers for that and any other support you can offer will be gratefully received. The Club is indebted to the hard work of the enthusiastic amateurs who manage and coach our teams and parents’ encouragement from the touchline gives everyone a big boost. If you think you can help please get in touch via your team manager or the Club website.

Good luck to everyone and enjoy the forthcoming season!

Jim Hockett

Chairman

KHFC Executive Committee

www.kingshillfc.org