

Bedford Town FC Youth Development



Open Letter to Biddenham Community

17th February 2021

Hello

I am writing as the Chairman of Bedford Town FC Youth Development (BTFC-YD), the Youth section of Bedford Town FC, the premier football club in Bedford.

We are a Grassroots Youth Football Club with Charter Standard Development status, affiliated to the Bedfordshire FA. We currently have 18 teams from under-8 to under-18, run by volunteer coaches and assistants, and play in various local and regional Leagues on a Saturday and a Sunday during the season.

I am delighted to let you know that, after some months of negotiation, we have secured the lease for the Biddenham Country Park Sports Centre, more commonly known as Kings Field. From our current arrangement which sees us playing on numerous facilities in and around Bedford, Kings Field provides us with a wonderful facility which will be the home and hub for our teams, and enables us to grow as a Club. We also look forward to providing opportunities for the local community and beyond to engage with us and get involved. Being a part of the local community is something we are very much looking forward to.

Once the current challenges of Covid-19 restrictions have eased, we will be preparing for the youth teams to get back to regular training sessions, playing matches, and for our young players to enjoy football once again. We will also be working to hire out the facilities offered by Kings Field (indoors and outdoors) for any functions and events that can be accommodated.

As the leaseholder, we are now responsible for the management of Kings Field and the costs associated with maintaining and improving the site (Pavilion and Grounds), rent and utilities etc. As an example, we have already engaged Bedford Borough Council in the maintenance and development of the pitches themselves, and have further improvements planned.

Use of the site by residents

I know that many local residents may wish to continue to visit the site, as they have already been doing before our lease was in place. I hope therefore that you will continue to show the appropriate level of respect for our property and that it's primary use is as a Sports facility for children. I would therefore ask that:

- Anyone walking dogs on and around the sports field ensure that they pick up after their dogs, as dog mess is a health hazard and particularly dangerous for children;

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- That visitors keep off the pitches so that they can be maintained in good condition for our club matches and events;
- You enter the site via the front entrance and refrain from climbing over any external and internal fences; some of these have already been damaged and we have had to repair these at a cost to us;

Activity during Covid-19 lockdown

In line with government and FA guidance, BTFC-YD matches and training have been stopped until further notice. However, I am aware of a recent incident when a group of uninvited young men entered to site to play football; this was a breach of the current lockdown rules and was nothing to do with BTFC-YD. It has been reported to the Police, who attended on site, and will be monitoring the site in the future. Please adhere to Covid-19 guidelines when visiting the site.

Working together

We are looking forward to building a strong relationship with local communities. Please direct any enquiries regarding the use of the Pavilion building and/or pitches to me:

Dennis O'Meara – 07777 641900 – d.omeara@btinternet.com

Take care- stay well

With best wishes

Dennis

Dennis O'Meara - Bedford Town FC Youth Development Chairman

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