



Salisbury Rovers FC

CLUB SECRETARY'S ANNUAL REPORT

22 July 2023



INTRODUCTION



If I was the boss of youth football.....

"I would listen and consider ideas from the players. I would also let the players have more freedom over where they want to play on the pitch, what they want to play in their training sessions etc."

Louie, Salisbury Rovers player

Salisbury Rovers FC is now SEVEN years old!

Full details of our development model and our planning for club facilities, children's participation and coaching can be found in our updated [Club Development Plan](#).

This Club Secretary's report aims to provide an overview of the highlights of the year and a quick summary of priorities for next season.

“ We take a human rights-based approach to sport and explore how that could be embedded in our sporting practice.... looking at a child's right to play, right to be heard, right to develop, and taking a holistic approach to sport so that children are entitled to participate in decision-making.”

Debbie Sayers
Salisbury Rovers FC Club Founder and Coach

SEASON HIGHLIGHTS



Some highlights to the last season include:

- Vibrant and varied Saturday sessions using different playing settings.
- Input of children and young people into all operations and delivery of the club.
- Specific signage and leaflets on children's rights and discussion with children to raise awareness of rights at the club.
- Free community football offer on the Friary and at Five Rivers in school holidays.
- Children playing competitive futsal matches.
- Free girls' football during Saturday sessions.
- Children and young people competing in tournaments.
- Development of an u15 team for next season.
- Development of player led 6-a-side team (post-18).
- Successful transition of u18 players to adult football.
- Increased and sustained growth of members (the club is full, and there's a waiting list).
- Development of a reliable and committed volunteer 'workforce'.
- Denis, Ivan and Aaron became qualified coaches further expanding our coaching workforce.
- Increased involvement from women on the field!
- Better organised social activities and events through the appointment of a social secretary.
- Demonstrations & discussions held at club sessions explaining 'how we coach' (an introduction to the Constraints Led Approach (CLA) and child-led practice).
- Clearer information to all parents requesting a place at the club on our practice.
- Rovers engaging beyond the club to promote a rights based approach to sport. This has included presenting to St Mary's University, Loughborough University, FIFA, UK Sport, UK Coaching Summit and hosting visits from high-performance sports leaders via UK Sport and an FA research project led by Chichester University.
- Rovers appointed to the Leadership Team of the Children's Coaching Collaborative.
- Rovers supporting the Children's Football Alliance's work.
- Rovers winning FA Positive Football Environment Award.
- Keir Highly Commended as FA Young Volunteer of the Year.
- The '*what should football look like*' project. This was a slide deck shared at Loughborough University including the ideas of young people. This will be factored into next season's planning.

LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT



We have around 90 children at our Saturday sessions and many more wanting to join the club. We are re-organising sessions to include more children next season but there is a significant waiting list, and the club can only grow with the capacity of volunteers to lead and deliver sessions.

We continue to host a weekly Friary session and are now reorganising this session to offer football to a new generation of young people on the estate and to support their football aspirations.

The club also reaches around a further 50 children with free girls' football and free football in the school holidays.

“ All they’ve ever had is our kind of system and it hasn’t held them back. So, they are our biggest advocates if you look at play versus performance. They are self-motivated young people who have taken every opportunity to play with or without a coach.”

Debbie Sayers
Salisbury Rovers FC Club Founder and Coach

PLAYER FEEDBACK



If I was the boss of youth football.....

“Make it the kids’ game, because if the coaches keep repeating the drills again and again that takes all the fun away. If it’s a kid’s game the kids get to decide what to do. Learning by playing games which are fun and that they want to play.”

Paddy, Salisbury Rovers player

We work directly with children each week, seeking their voices and recording their views, and demonstrating to them how we act up them. Our priority is the development of the person in sport. Footballers are *people* who play football. The person always comes first.

This year we established a players' group and we got into to work straight away after the first session by actioning requests from the committee, e.g. ordering Rovers' water bottles for the end of season party and footballs with Rovers' badge on them.

The feedback from this group and the '*what should football look like*' project will be factored in to club planning for next season.

FACILITIES

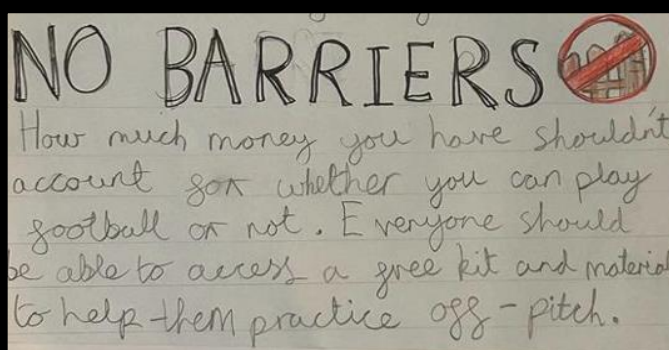


Five Rivers has proved to be a good base and we can continue to use this on Saturday mornings but it could be much improved.

We have had ongoing issues with trying to organise storage onsite and with the quality of the pitch. An FA pitch report found Five Rivers' pitch to be of low quality and this is borne out by playing experience. The pitch tears up very easily in any bad weather. We are working with a Wiltshire Councillor. Five Rivers and The FA to look at ways to develop our facilities further at the pitch.

We have also used the Sarum Academy 3G which is a fantastic venue. We have also booked futsal sessions for next season between December and February.

GRANTS AND FUNDING



Hattie, Salisbury Rovers player

We have held grants from:

- Wiltshire Community Foundation
- Salisbury City Council
- Wiltshire and Swindon Sport
- National Lottery

We have completed the funding periods for Wiltshire Community Foundation/Salisbury City Council and the free project at the Friary is now self-sustaining. The National Lottery grant has also been spent on free school holiday football.

We will continue to offer free sessions in every school holidays.

We will continue to hold free girls' only sessions.

VOLUNTEER AND COACHING DEVELOPMENT

We thank all our coaches and volunteers for their help this season.

As the club expands, we continue to prioritise the recruitment of likeminded volunteers and coaches. This season, we have welcomed many new volunteers. Parents who get a FA DBS check can enable our club to offer an additional free play session or match. We encourage more adults to get involved! We also applaud our young volunteers who have acted as terrific role models for the younger children!



Priorities for next season include increasing the confidence and capacity of coaching leads to plan and deliver consistently with club philosophy.

But volunteering is not limited to coaching! We are always looking for help with committee positions, administration etc. Everyone has talents they can share, and the more families involved, the stronger our community will be.

“ Our philosophies and principles are based on human rights. They are not up for debate.”

Debbie Sayers
Salisbury Rovers FC Club Founder and Coach

A REVIEW: OUR DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Our development plan established a radical new development schedule for 2017-18. The table below briefly measures our progress. The colour scheme indicates the progress made – **green** for good progress; **yellow** for some progress; and **red** for no action this season.

| | | | |
|---------------|--------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Club sessions | Matches | Girls' Football | Community Football |
| Multi-sports | Kickabouts | Social events and trips | Futsal |
| | Football workshops | Goalkeeping | |

The red boxes are largely the result of a need to review these two areas to see if they remain consistent with club priorities.



NEXT SEASON

- Continue to keep groups small and individualised to allow child-led play and flexibility.
- Supporting coach development and confidence around Constraints Led Approach.
- Recruiting more coaches and on-field volunteers.
- Encourage more parents and families to get involved!
- Offering more freeplay and encouraging children to participate.
- Offer more matches to younger age groups.
- U15 team starts in the league.

- Continue to offer goalkeeper sessions.
- Develop girls' football.
- Greater role for players' committee.
- Visit from the Dutch FA.
-

Further long-term plans will be reviewed but it is always acknowledged that the dynamic nature of the current situation requires flexibility and adaptability.

Thanks to all for our children and all parents for their support this year!

Special thanks to our committee, coaches and volunteers.

