

Salisbury Rovers FC Development Plan



"It's their game, let them play".



SALISBURY ROVERS FC

1. OUR IDENTITY

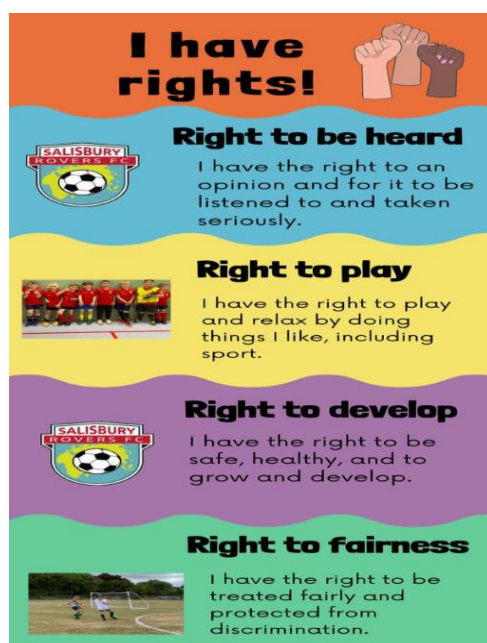
"I like that there are no adults shouting and I have the freedom to play"

Salisbury Rovers player



This section defines Salisbury Rovers' identity as an award-winning, inclusive, child-led, progressive, ground-breaking youth football club.

We believe youth football belongs to the kids who play it. All our operations are underpinned by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (**UNCRC**) and the rights of the child. The Youth Voice is central to our identity. All children will be told they have rights!

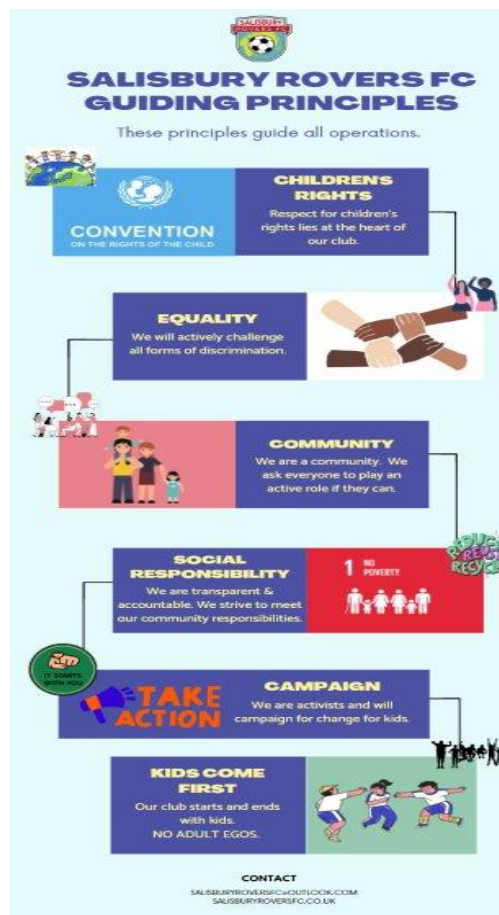


We are **not** non-competitive. We believe competition belongs to the kids. Kids care about winning and losing but as grown-ups we know the result will tell us very little about a child's personal and football development. So, we're not afraid of kids losing or making mistakes. We allow kids to learn in their own time and according to their own developmental needs. After all, they are children, what's the rush? Youth sports should not feel like a race (and certainly not a race to nowhere).

Youth sports are also about values beyond the game itself, e.g. respect, having fun, making friends, learning life skills. Our football model is about creating a positive and fun learning environment which encourages decision-making and individual responsibility. We want to help young people be the best they can be and our core activities aim to provide opportunities for the development of the 'person' as well as the 'player'. We believe in our young people so we don't put limits on what they are capable of.

Our work uses the best available evidence about development, and we consistently engage with those working creatively to change the game at every level. We know our work will challenge the status quo but we will continue to be bold, innovative, child-centred and compassionate. We are driven by core values – equality, respect, empowerment and enjoyment.

We think football is also about community. Our club wants to be financially accessible to all kids, providing free access wherever needed together with opportunities for young people to pursue football related careers. This has led to the creation of our **Guiding Principles** which are set out below.



2. GOVERNANCE

1. GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

Salisbury Rovers is committed to the highest principles of open and good governance. This goes further than monthly committee meetings. Governance is not a tick box exercise.

Good governance is about how we think, act and how we conduct our operations, internally and externally.

Despite the fact that we are not a public body, we aim to embed the highest standards of good governance practice. For example, we are cognisant of the [12 Principles](#) enshrined in the Strategy on Innovation and Good Governance at local level. We also aim to promote and follow the Seven Principles of Public Life (also known as the '[Nolan Principles](#)').

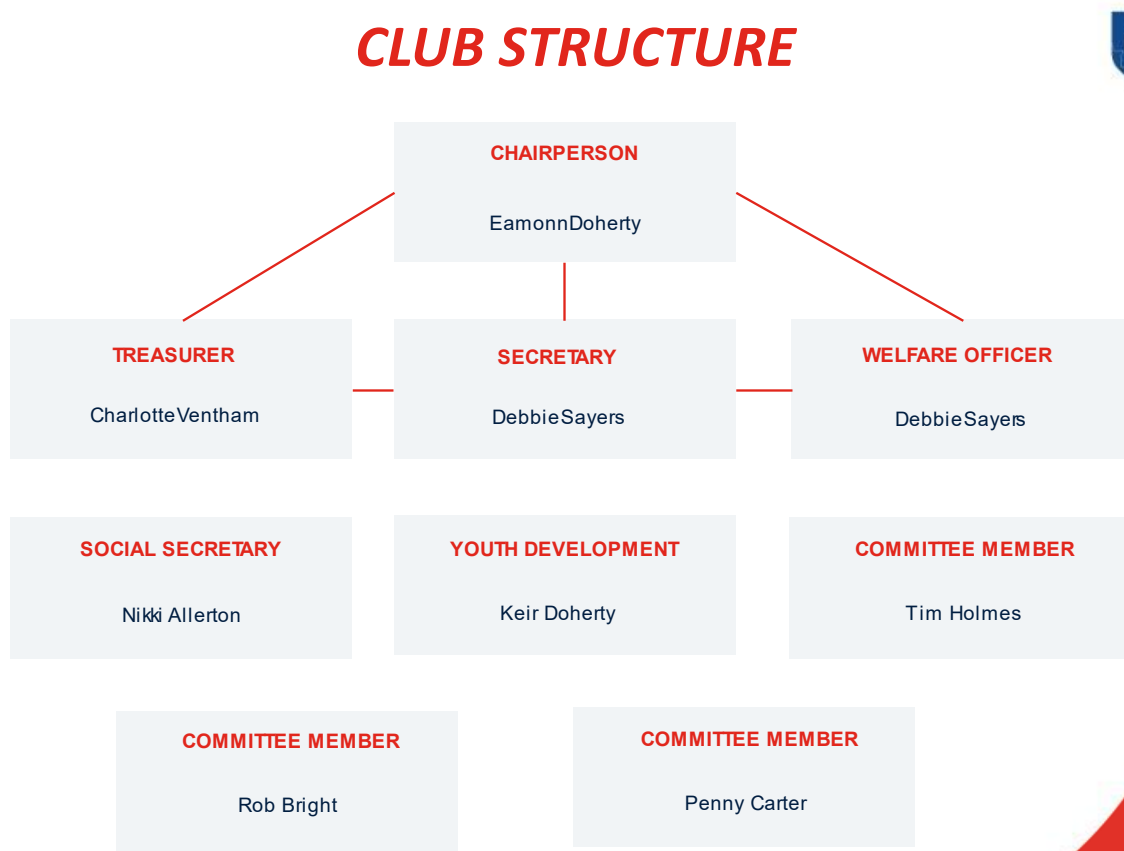


2. CLUB STRUCTURE

Our committee meets monthly and is guided by our Guiding Principles. The committee is comprised of

1. A chair
2. A secretary
3. A treasurer
4. Committee members
5. Associate committee members
6. Youth committee members

Our Club structure looks like this:



3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF POST HOLDERS

Chair: Strategic guidance, organise and chair meetings, support the operational work of the secretary.

Secretary: Responsible for the operational work of the club, venues, registers, risk assessments, coach development

Welfare Officer: Safeguarding and Youth voice. Ensuring the UNCRC is embedded in practice.

Treasurer: Monthly accounts and reports on membership payments. Liaise with accountant.

Social Secretary: Organise social events and liaise with parents about volunteering for events.

Youth Development: Responsibilities for youth representation and embedding youth voice (this role will be undertaken by one of your children or young people).

Committee member: Attend committee meetings and take on tasks as required by committee and in accordance with skillset.

4. VOICES OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

An essential part of our governance is that the voices of young people are sought, included and acted upon across all operations and activities. This includes formal structures (like youth meetings) but also regular engagement across sessions and session planning.

For example, at **every** session delivered by the club, across all age groups the voices of children and young people (**CYP**) are sought in at least **four** specific ways:

1. A meet and greet is held to welcome and share news and ideas.
2. CYP are asked – what shall we do today?
3. CYP are asked for feedback at the end of the session – thumbs/thumbs down etc.
4. CYP are asked – what shall we do next week? Their ideas are then factored into planning.

Our volunteers are trained to facilitate and encourage this participation process on the model below which is built on Professor Laura Lundy's [model](#) of participation under Article 12 of the UNCRC.

RIGHT TO BE HEARD



APPLIES IRRESPECTIVE OF AGE

TELL!

Make kids part of the discussion at every level.

Tell kids you value what they say and that their thoughts have impact.



ASK!

Ask kids what they want from their game.

Ask for feedback.

Create real dialogue



LISTEN!

Listen, make notes, share them with children and young people.

Don't shape their feedback... listen to it!



SHOW!

Show kids that their ideas have value.

Show them that their feedback changes things.



LET'S CHANGE YOUTH SPORTS!

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3. FOOTBALL DEVELOPMENT

"As many as possible, for as long as possible in the best environment possible".¹

1. PHILOSOPHICAL UNDERPINNING

Rovers' football development plan is nationally unique. It is summarised in the resource below – a resource sent to all prospective new parents. This has also been shared on FIFA courses.



INTERESTED IN A PLACE AT OUR CLUB?
A FEW THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

We're full in some age groups & looking to expand.
If you're interested in a place at our club, before putting your child's name on our waiting list, we'd ask you to consider these truths about who we are and what we do. Then ask yourself: are we a good fit for you & your child?

OUR THINKING We want kids to have fun. Kids' voices are prioritised. We follow a children's rights based approach. We have a clear view on how kids acquire skills. We don't have kids dribbling around cones. We think long term	RIGHT TO PLAY We don't 'train' 6 year olds. We don't trial. We don't select. We promise equal playing time. We believe children have a right to play and that they can make choices about how this looks.
ADULT DIRECTION Our adults don't shout directions. Kids' voices should always be louder than adults. We encourage independence & confidence. The world needs thinking young people as well as thinking footballers.	FREEPLAY We offer lots of freeplay. We're a club for kids who love football and want to play without constant adult intervention. We're not for kids who need to wait to be coached to play. We believe this self-motivation drives development. Kids who play more get better.
WE'RE NOT NON-COMPETITIVE Our younger age groups do not play in leagues to allow flexibility from rigid team sizes, structures and adult control. But we are NOT non-competitive. Instead, we encourage true competitors - kids who are resilient, who lead, who support.	LONG-TERM DEVELOPMENT We think long-term. No coach can tell you a 7 year old is going to be professional footballer. This is nonsense unsupported by evidence. Likewise 'best with best'. They're all excuses for adults to select. Good coaches coach all kids.
WE DO THINGS DIFFERENTLY We're proud of this. We ask families to make a positive choice to come to our club. If you're shopping around trying to get your child into any team available, we're not likely to be a good fit for you. We have lots of information on our website. Please inform yourself before requesting a place. https://www.salisburyroversfc.co.uk/coaching.html	
<i>The game belongs to the kids who play it</i>	

In essence, our philosophical underpinning has **three** key features:

1. Our operations and football development model are underpinned by the UNCRC. This means we take a person-centred, human rights-based approach to sport.

¹ Mark O'Sullivan, FA Coach Educator, Swedish FA.
Development Plan version 2023

2. Our thinking and delivery reflects the best available evidence in sports research. For example, we do not select but think long-term about the development of the child and player.
3. Our coaching is science based - it is underpinned by latest thinking and evidence on skill development and pedagogical practice.

2. OUR DELIVERY: TEAM AND OPPORTUNITY GROWTH PLANNER



The table below summarises our current delivery model and stage reached.

Activity	Long-term aim
Weekly CYP participation meetings	Putting kids at the heart of the club requires listening and action. CYP participation meetings occur weekly. We need to listen to what kids want and act on it. We need to do this inclusively and in a variety of ways and formats. We will be responsive to needs and evolve with CYP.
Youth empowerment	Provide multiple opportunities for CYP to grow and develop holistically for example, presenting at events, playing for different teams, moving into adult football, decisions-making in and outside of the game, running committee meetings etc
Club sessions	<p>Club sessions will be run inclusively. Every child is known. Every child is understood. Provision is individualised.</p> <p>Sessions are delivered <i>with</i> not <i>to</i> children and should be imaginatively used to provide access to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different environments: grass, 3G, MUGA, street. • Specialist sessions: goalkeeper, futsal. • Players' workshop sessions (see below) with professional coaches, local players, referees.
Local matches	We will play regular local matches including futsal, football and tournaments. Increase opportunities for child-centred match practice in local area. Link with local leagues etc.
League football	We will support the choices of young people moving into league football.

Girls' football	We aim to work with clubs outside and inside Salisbury to promote the girls' game. We will also look to research what girls want from football and continue to hold girls' only sessions and matches. We will provide the options for mixed play and girls' only football. Working inclusively and individually, we want girls to feel comfortable in mixed settings too so that they do not feel compelled to play in a segregated way. We will continue to connect to provide pathways for girls into the women's game.
Disability football	We will provide inclusive and individualised provision to ensure that all CYP feel at home and are welcome at the club. In terms of disability only provision, we will look to connect with local authorities to build this. We have made strong connections with a disability only team in Somerset.
Free and community football	<p>Free and community football is central to what we do. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Football in areas of socio-economic disadvantage • Holiday football • Drop in football • Football for older teenagers • Girls' football • Community based football <p>This work should not be isolated: it should be interlinked with all other activities. It underpins our values.</p>
Football pathways for young people	We will continue to link with individuals and clubs who will work collaboratively with us to help support young people's development. We have supported several players to obtain trials with pro clubs and others to move into adult football.
Adult football	Following in offering 5-a-side vets' football, we would like to develop our own adult football team to offer pathway opportunities and opportunities for adults returning to the game.

4. FINANCING

"It's an absolute disgrace that kids are being priced out of football in this country. It's meant to be our national sport. It's meant to be all-inclusive. At the moment it's not. I would have been priced out of football just now."

Former Dundee Utd player and Scottish international Andy McLaren

We look to finance community projects with grant funding. With funding, these projects can run with coaches who must believe in our approach and be able to meet project aims.

We will look to make occasional and community drop-in football self-funding.

We will look to offer 'pop-up' football for free.

Our primary aim is to keep costs as low as possible while ensuring the club is meeting its costs and protecting its sustainability. Our club will always be made accessible for families who cannot afford to pay. We will look to encourage local businesses to sponsor free access.

Our fees are currently:

- One-off registration of £30
- Monthly fees of £15 paid throughout the year.
- Many children play for free via access to our hardship funds.

No child will ever be prevented from playing football at our club because of financial issues.

Our young people will have a say in how the club is run and how fund is spent.

Our annual accounts are audited by a professional accountant and shared with the club each summer.

5. Facilities

Our club uses Five Rivers on Saturday mornings.

We use the outside pitches and also book futsal sessions for next season between December and February the winter.

We are working with Five Rivers and The FA to look at ways to develop our facilities further at the pitch. This has been very slow going!

We have also used the Sarum Academy 3G which is a fantastic venue.

We require support with the pitches which are in poor quality and storage facility at the site.

This is a priority area for the club.



6. Marketing & Communication

Marketing

Our club undertakes very limited marketing save for free sessions as we do not need to recruit players. Families constantly contact us via word of mouth.

Our youth committee members assist with drawing up social media materials to advertise teams and sessions.

We follow all FA guidance in relation to our advertising and also ensure that all our communications respect human rights and fundamental equality principles.

Communication

Communication is an essential part of good governance. We communicate within the club via email and WhatsApp. Additionally, we hold open sessions with parents to explain our model and answer questions.

