

4.1 Club History - celebrating 60 years 1960 -2023

Welling United Football Club was founded in 1963. It began as a youth team, playing in on a park pitch.

In 1977, Welling moved to the Park View Road ground. Having been unoccupied for some time, the new ground was almost derelict.

It is not truly known when football was first played at Park View Road, but a significant grandstand was built by the late 1930s. It suffered substantial damage during The Blitz of World War II and lay derelict for some years after. This was until a campaign was initiated to reform Bexleyheath & Welling F.C. Crowds soon soared to over 2,000.

In 1950 the current main stand was built. Crowds continued to rise in the 1960s and so the main stand was enlarged, and covered terracing was increased. By the 1970s however, the club (which was then known as Bexley United) had fallen on tough times and were forced to fold. The last game was in April 1976.

Welling United (1977) then secured a 15-year lease of the ground. It had been left to rot and a fire had damaged the main stand.

Erith & Belvedere have been ground sharing since the 1999 season. Improvements were made to the Park View Road ground in 2004, which included a new covered stand.

As a result of severe storms and gale-force winds in December 2006, the floodlights at Park View Road were damaged. Due to safety reasons all the floodlight pylons on the Welling side of the ground were removed. The floodlights were put in place during the month of June 2007 and are fully functional, one pylon positioned in each corner.

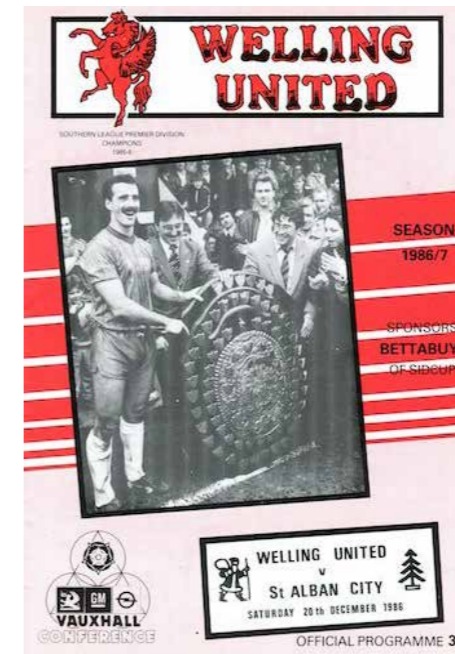
In the close season of 2015–16 both Welling United bars, the boardroom and parking area at Park View Road underwent renovations. In particular the hospitality areas at the ground were fully refitted to cater for match-days, and non-football related events and private bookings.



Historic photographs of Welling & Bexleyheath FC



Park View stadium 2023



4.2 A community club

The club is run by and for the local community. It is formally known as Welling United Football Club and is a community interest company.

The club was founded in 1963 and started its life as a park playing youth team, which has gone from strength to strength. The club currently caters for a wide range of teams for different age groups and leagues. The Welling United FC men's first team play in the national league south, the sixth tier of English football. They also have a senior Women's team that play in the London and South East Regional Women's league division 1.

The club also provides training facilities for over 26 youth teams, as well as a football academy with UEFA qualified coaches and mentoring programmes for a wide section of the local community. Furthermore Welling United FC have also created a senior Deaf Football team that plays in both local and national competitions.

The club provides a pathway for all players from age 2 to the first team (over 500 players in total). Furthermore Welling FC have a well established fan base including a Welling FC supporters club.

The club partners with local schools and offers scholarships, coaching and help their aspiring players in securing professional contracts as well as university placements.

The club is supported in terms of the ground provision by the London Borough of Bexley.

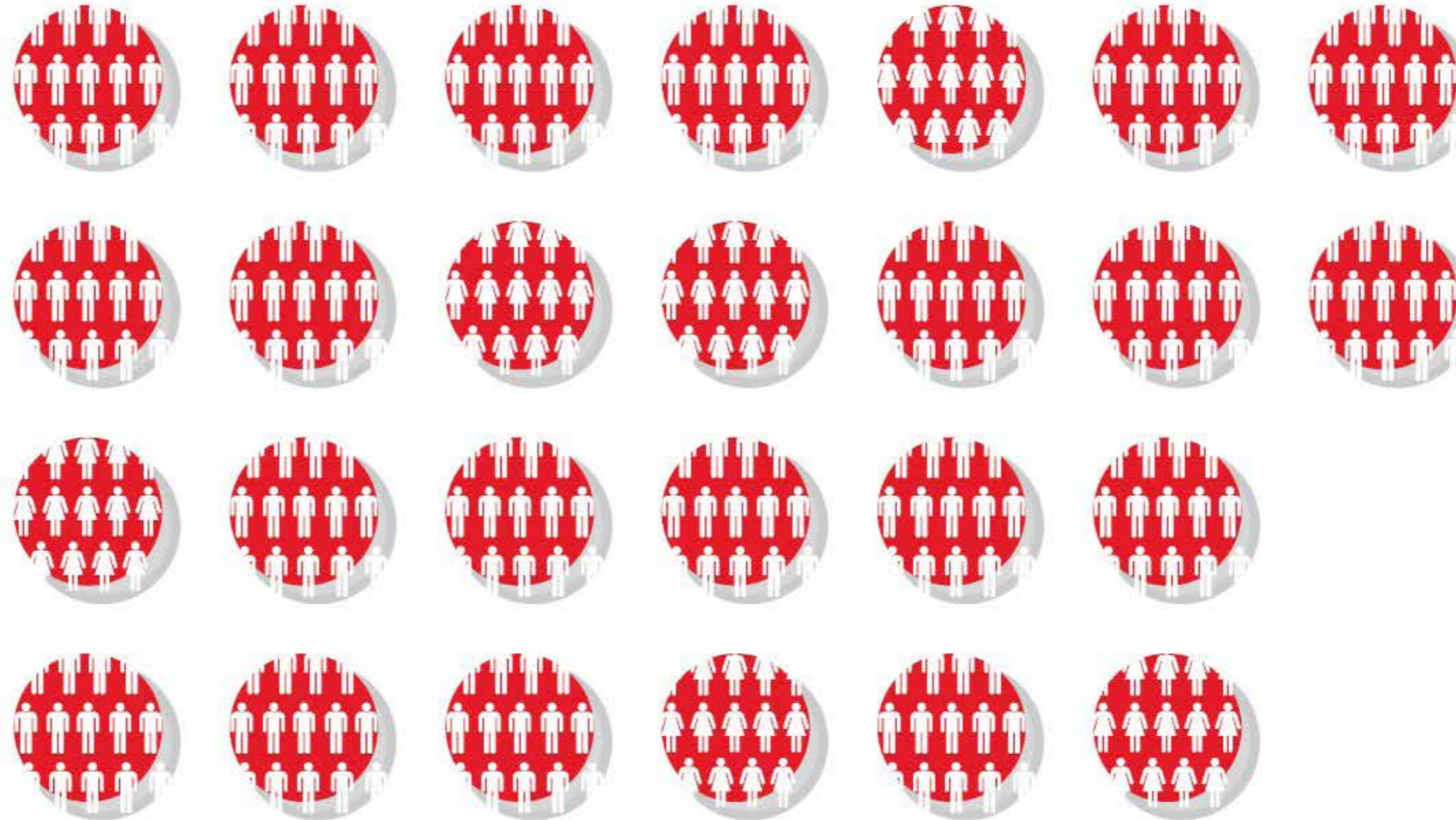
The Borough's plans for investing in and supporting community development in Bexley sets out various initiatives and outcomes that Welling United FC is ideally suited to support.

The London Borough of Bexley's corporate priorities are stated as:

- Growth that benefits all
- Clean and green local places
- Strong and resilient communities and families
- Living well
- Innovation and self sufficiency

The club and the council's aspirations are closely aligned and Welling FC has begun a rigorous programme to reach out to more of the community.

The club aspires to provide better facilities and support for local residents and needs new investment to continue their journey.



Current Welling United teams - 26 teams representing 500+ kids

Aspiration for 50 teams representing 1000+ kids



4.2 A community club

The Club's community outreach is extensive.

Working and engaging within the community is a key focus of the Youth Academy. The services offered by the community team are as follows:

PPA Cover/ Upskilling Teachers

We have a group of staff who have experience of working in primary schools across Bexley, that can deliver PE lessons which coincide with PPA cover for your teachers. Alternatively, we can deliver PE lessons working with your teachers to upskill their ability to lead lessons and assist with leaving the comfort zone of their classroom.

Active Play Lunchtimes

Welling ITC can add structure to your lunchtimes through sport. We are happy to setup and run sporting activities in an assigned area of the playground for various groups of children. Equally we can set up various stations and step back and supervise the children interact and problem solve with each other.

Our playtime activities aid in combating behaviour issues through structured sport and adult initiated play.

Extra-curricular Sport Clubs

In addition to school time activities Welling ITC offer extra-curricular sports clubs.

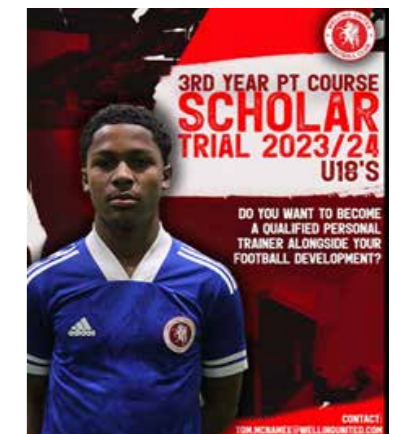
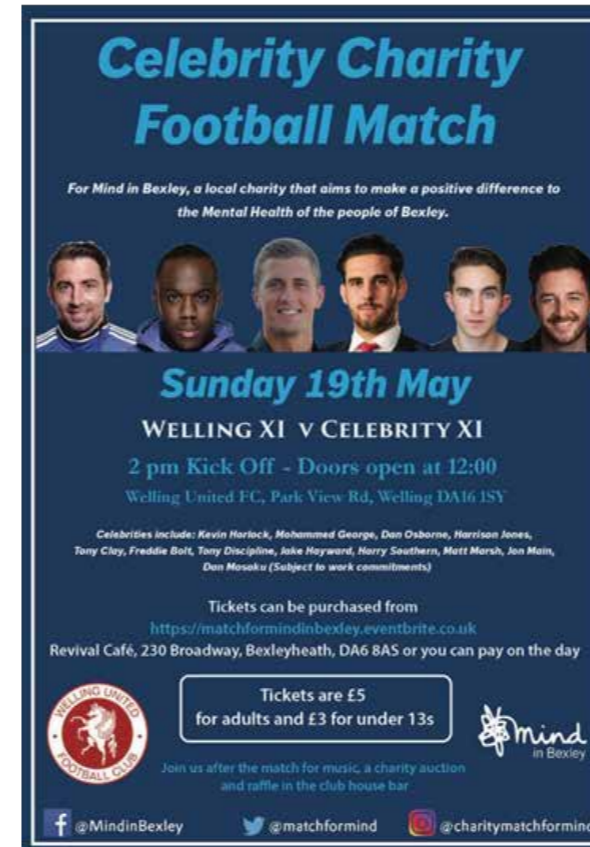
Our clubs are a fun, safe environment for your children to receive an extra hour a week of playing with their friends. Our caring group of staff, who are qualified in a variety of sports, will deliver fun sessions which aim to improve children's confidence and social skills, as well as their technical skills in the given sport.

Our clubs can be funded directly by the school, or the clubs can be a parent paid service in which we would take all the administration away from the school.

Holiday Camps

Our holidays camps are a fantastic opportunity for children to come and play football in a fun and safe environment. In addition to playing football, it is a great experience for the children to come and develop their social skills as they make new friends.

At our camps we organise activities to be completed as a team, individual challenges, as well as matches and tournaments.



4.3 Present and the need for change

Welling United Football Club is currently in the Vanarama National League South (Tier 6).

The club's stadium is located on the site. The ground's current capacity is for 4,050 people. The average gate is around 500-700 spectators per game.

The stadium has standing spectator areas to the north and south, with seating to the east and west. There are two entrances, both are located along Park View Road.

The stadium has other facilities such as a small bar, function area, and club shop. These are contained in deteriorating small-scale buildings that range between 1- 2 storeys located around the football pitch.

The football stadium grounds and facilities are in need of renovation. The current facilities are poor and outdated, there is a lack of facilities which hinders the usability of the stadium.

They include:

- No classrooms for desk based training
- No safe and secure changing facilities for male and female players and officials.
- No gymnasium or physio rehabilitation centre
- No astroturf to provide all weather training facilities
- Insufficient commercial/ community facilities for hospitality, functions, and exhibitions.



Views of the football ground

The existing conditions can be described as follows:

- The ground facilities are in various stages of dilapidation.
- The changing facilities are in a state of disrepair, rendering them unusable. Welling currently use the Erith & Belvedere facilities on the East side of the ground.
- The main stand seating rake is of timber construction and presents a potential fire hazard.
- The roof is in a state of substantial dis-repair with leakages causing damp and drainage problems.
- The stadium electrical installation and flood lighting require continuous maintenance and repair.
- Facilities at the ground are poor. There is little scope to improve as due to limited income, therefore facilities deteriorate and need to be maintained.
- The existing Park View Road ground has tired facilities is currently a bad advert for club and council.

An upgraded stadium would ensure financial sustainability of the football club which is currently not viable for the club or its owners.

Additionally, it would provide a significant community and sport asset in the London Borough of Bexley with additional community facilities for use and enjoyment by the local residents and general public.

The proposal will also aim to maintain the clubs heritage and legacy within the Borough.

Please refer to images to the right which illustrate the poor state of repair of the ground both externally and internally.

