



Uniting Blackburn Football in the Community



December 2007
Blackburn United Community Football Club
West Lothian

Background, Aims & Objectives

The village of Blackburn has a population of 4800 and is located in West Lothian, several miles to the west of Livingston. Based at Murrayfield Park in Blackburn since its formation in 1978, the Blackburn United Junior Football Club has 14 years of a 25 year lease left remaining on the ground and its pavilion. The current premises consist of two changing rooms, two shower rooms, a dedicated referee's changing area, a small committee room and a small kitchen. Externally there is one full size, grass pitch. Football on the ground has been played since the 1930's and its current layout with running track was established in the early 1960's when the pavilion and other facilities were constructed. The current mesh boundary fence was renovated in 1980, the last major updating of the ground. Consequently, Murrayfield Park is an aging facility, is expensive to maintain and is considered unfit for purpose in the modern football climate.

The youth club is currently made up of ten teams (see appendix 5) that range in age from Under 9's through to Under 21's, providing coaching for upwards of 130 children. There is also a soccer school that provides targeted coaching for children from ages 5 to 7 to equip them with the skills and the confidence necessary to progress to one of the age group teams. Within the club there are 28 coaches, 19 of whom are SFA qualified, and 2 goalkeeping coaches, both SFA qualified. All 30 coaches have disclosure certificates from Disclosure Scotland. In addition there are 3, non-coaching secretaries and 11 First Aiders, 9 of whom have completed additional player protection courses. The club has a child protection officer and an SYFA disclosure signatory, is currently working towards West Lothian Council Accreditation and has a code of behaviour for parents, players and officials alike. The youth club currently use playing pitches hired from West Lothian Council in both Blackburn and Seafield but this is an unsatisfactory situation as the changing facilities for these pitches are poorly maintained and considered unfit for purpose.

The Club, consequently, are progressing towards becoming part of a fully recognised Community Football Club, where all football teams in the village will be part of the same overall structure. The following document sets out a proposal for ground regeneration which will allow the club to meet the objectives laid down in the club constitution (see appendix 4) and which we consider essential in order to accommodate the existing needs of the football teams playing on a weekly basis in the village while also allowing for further expansion. The club has a proactive committee who are willing to work in partnership with others with the express aim of both developing football in Blackburn in a safe, caring environment and expanding the club's involvement in the community by using this facility to attract more people, particularly children and their parents, to football in the village. Our objective is to have a facility that provides children and adults alike with an opportunity to develop their potential and encourage them to continue in a healthy activity that will divert them from involvement in anti social behaviour within the local community.

Why should Blackburn receive planning for such a project?

- * To provide a service for the community
- * To address the lack of suitable facilities in the community to cater for Scotland's most popular sport
- * To maintain a level of interest from children to promote to them healthy lifestyles and deflect them from drug and alcohol misuse (see appendix 7)
- * To help children to understand discipline, respect and teamwork in a sporting environment
- * To provide all weather football facilities that could be made available to all within West Lothian for daytime hire and allocated set periods of evening and weekend hire (see appendix 8)
- * To help the club to run outdoor coaching initiatives throughout the year
- * To provide the club with the ability to develop coaches throughout the year
- * To get the whole community involved in football and place an emphasis upon the social benefits of participation in the sport
- * Letting of the pitches would allow the facilities to be maintained and enhanced and provide the necessary finance to fund a caretaker and a facilities manager

The Proposal

Main Pitch (see appendix 9)

Playing area to be approximately 98x62 metres (3rd generation synthetic)

2 Goalposts with three net supports for each goal

2 Brick/perspex dugouts

400 lux Floodlights (SFA requirement, see appendix 6)

Pitchside barriers/rail around whole of pitch with two gates to allow maintenance vehicle access (minimum 2m run-off area between touchline and barriers)

Railed off entrance/exit to/from pavilion/pitch for players and match officials

Secondary Pitches (see appendix 9)

Floodlit 7-a-side synthetic pitch (55x36m), two goals and 8 foot high boundary fence

Pitch 2: Grass 90m x 45m min, two goals, pitchside barriers/rail around whole of pitch with two gates to allow maintenance vehicle access (minimum 2m run-off area between touchline and barriers). Pitch 2 to be location of gala day activities

Pitch 3: Grass 90m x 45m min, two goals

Pavilion building

To maximize potential the building should have central heating and there should be three distinct areas to the building, each area sealable from the other;

Main Pitch Area

2 Large changing rooms with internal bench seating & shower facilities, capacity for 22 players in each changing room to comply with SFA regulations. Must include 1 toilet in each dressing room and one wash hand basin. Exit door/tunnel to playing area

1 Large referees room with internal bench seating & shower facilities/toilet, capacity for 3 officials

2 Storage rooms for match kit/training kit/balls etc

1 Managers/Physio's room

1 Secretaries office

1 large lounge/entertaining/committee area with window to pitch & small bar area

1 Kitchen area with hatch facing pitch for spectator refreshments & hatch through to lounge/entertaining/committee area

1 Male & 1 Female toilet

Secondary Pitches Area

4 Changing rooms for Pitch 2 & Pitch 3 with seating & shower/toilet

2 referees rooms for Pitch 2 & Pitch 3 with seating & shower/toilet

Separate external exit/entrance door(s) to allow access to Pitch 2 & Pitch 3

2 Storage rooms for match kit/training kit/balls etc

1 mini-gym area

1 Male & 1 Female toilet

7-a-side Changing Area

2 Changing rooms for 7-a-side pitch with seating & shower/toilet

External Requirements

Male and Female toilets with external access only for spectators

200 Seat Stand to front (or side) of building (see appendix 1)

Extra Considerations

1 large function room with minimum 60 persons capacity plus male & female toilets and bar area

Flagpole

Main Pitch Spectator facilities

30 metres of covered terracing with crush barriers & lighting to accommodate 300 persons standing (see appendix 2)

Flat concrete hard standing around all 4 sides

PA system

Miscellaneous

Garage area for lawn mower and pitch maintenance materials with access to both main and secondary pitches

Outside taps/water supply for boot washing/pitch watering

8 foot high (non-mesh) boundary fence around main pitch/pavilion facility with brick turnstiles (see appendix 3) and large exit gates at north east and at north west corners

Car parking for 40 vehicles

SFA Membership

Scottish football is progressing towards a time when the Scottish FA Cup will be opened up to many more clubs. We have seen the exploits of Linlithgow Rose this season and the income and media interest such achievements can generate.

As it currently stands, for any club to participate in the Scottish FA Cup, it must either be a Full or an Associate member of the SFA, or win their respective League Championship or Scottish Junior Cup. The only status that guarantee's participation every season is either Full or Associate SFA membership.

Some examples of Associate member clubs are Glasgow University, Newton Stewart, Burntisland Shipyard & Golspie Sutherland, all of whom play at a lower level than Blackburn United. All these clubs are guaranteed entry every season to the Scottish FA Cup, and all benefit financially from being SFA members.

To become an Associate member of the Scottish Football Association, clubs must meet certain ground regulations in order to qualify for membership, these regulations are attached and have been incorporated into this ground redevelopment proposal (see appendix 6).

Blackburn United, if they meet the required ground criteria, can apply for SFA Associate membership and therefore guaranteed entry to the first round of the Scottish FA Cup which, along with the financial benefits, helps to increase the profile of the club.

Blackburn United's continued membership of the Scottish Junior Football Association, or any of the Youth FA's, would remain unaffected by such a move. As example Girvan FC, who compete in the Ayrshire Juniors and are SJFA members, are also SFA Associate members and compete in the Scottish FA Cup.

APPENDIX 4

Blackburn United
Football



Community
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Club Constitution

1. Name

The Club shall be called the Blackburn United Community Football Club (henceforth referred to in this document as the "Club"). Each individual team within the Club shall be known as "Blackburn United FC" with appropriate age group suffix as required. The Club colours shall be black and white with an alternative of yellow and black.

2. Object

The Club will endeavour to promote the welfare of all participants/members and will aim to increase opportunities for people of all age groups to participate in the game of Association Football through the provision of skilled coaching, irrespective of gender, race, religion or social status. Furthermore, the Club will aim to promote sportsmanship and fair play and shall provide facilities to allow participants/members to develop their full potential while also promoting the concept of healthy living through exercise and through participation in sport. The Club will encourage people to take up football coaching and will aim to provide opportunities for existing volunteers and coaches to develop their full potential while promoting the development of appropriate community sports club structures. Such development will take into account best practice and examples from other, similar clubs and organisations. To develop and strengthen links with the community of Blackburn as a whole, the Club will encourage as appropriate links and partnership projects with local schools, voluntary groups and other such local organisations.

3. Officials

(a) The Club will be run on a daily basis by an Executive Committee comprising a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Treasurer and Secretary. Co-opted club members will be required at the Executive Committee's discretion. A Central Committee will be made up of at least one member from each team registered with the club (see Appendix 1) and the Executive Committee will be appointed from this Central Committee at an Annual General Meeting (AGM). Each Executive Committee member shall hold office from the date of appointment until the next AGM unless otherwise resolved at an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM).

(b) Each team (see Appendix 1) will be run separately and autonomously by a Committee of at least three people with **at** least one member representing that team at Central Committee level. The Executive Committee Secretary will hold a register of committee members complete with contact details.

(c) Any new teams and their officials joining the club must have Central Committee approval before playing under the Clubs name.

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(d) The Executive/Central Committee will control the allocation of pitches for the home games of each team within the Club with the team playing in the Junior grade of football receiving priority over allocation of the main playing pitch.

4. Finance

(a) The finances of the club shall be maintained separately from the finances of each individual team.

(b) The Executive Committee shall control and operate, as necessary, a central fund via such bank accounts as it may require for the proper conduct of the Club. Any two from the Chairperson, Treasurer, and Secretary shall sign cheques.

(c) The central fund will be administered by the Executive Committee. Any funds raised by the Executive Committee shall be funds of the Club.

(d) Individual teams will subscribe an annual fee to the central fund, determined at the Annual General Meeting.

(e) As and when necessary the Central Committee shall actively promote fund raising schemes in collaboration with each individual team.

(f) Funds raised as a result of an individual team's own initiative shall be funds of that team.

5. Central Committee Meetings

Meetings of the Central Committee will be held at the discretion of the Executive Committee and these meetings shall be held on no less than six occasions per calendar year. Meetings shall be chaired by the Chairperson or, in their absence, the Vice Chairperson or, in the absence of both, a member selected by the Central Committee. A quorum will exist when at least 50% of the teams within the club are present (see Appendix 1). Each team will be allowed one vote and decisions shall be made by a simple majority of those attending the meeting. The Chairperson of the meeting shall have the casting vote in the event of a tie.

6. Annual and Extraordinary General Meetings

(a) An AGM shall be held in each year to:

- (i) receive a report of the activities of the Club over the previous year;
- (ii) receive a report of the Club's finances over the previous year;
- (iii) elect Club Officials; and

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(iv) consider any other business.

(b) Nominations for election of members as Executive Committee Officials shall be proposed by one and seconded by another of the Central Committee. Notice of any resolution to be proposed at the AGM shall be given to the Club Secretary.

(c) An EGM may be called at any time by a member of the Central Committee and shall be called within 21 days of the receipt by the Secretary of such a request stating the purposes for which the meeting is required. Business at an EGM may be any business that may be transacted at an AGM.

(d) The Secretary shall notify each Central Committee member of the date of a General Meeting (whether an AGM or an EGM), together with the purpose of the meeting, at least 21 days before the meeting.

(e) The quorum for a General Meeting shall be 50% of the teams within the club (see Appendix 1).

(f) The Chairperson or, in their absence, the Vice Chairperson or, in the absence of both, a member selected by the Central Committee, shall take the chair. Each club present shall have one vote and resolutions shall be passed by a simple majority. In the event of an equality of votes the Chairperson of the meeting shall have the casting vote.

(g) The Secretary, or a suitable member of the Central Committee, shall enter Minutes of General Meetings into the Minute Book of the Club.

7. Status of Constitution

This Constitution forms a binding agreement between each member of the Club. The Constitution cannot be altered, except at a General Meeting called for that purpose. Motions to alter the constitution at a General Meeting must be submitted, in writing, to the Secretary at least 21 days prior to that meeting.

8. Dissolution

(a) A resolution to dissolve the Club shall only be proposed at a General Meeting and shall require to be carried by a majority of at least three-quarters of the members present.

(b) The dissolution shall take effect from the date of the resolution and the members of the Central Committee shall be responsible for the winding up of the assets and liabilities of the Club.

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(c) On dissolution each individual team (see Appendix 1) will, if viable and if it is the will of that teams Committee, continue as a separate entity.

(d) Any surplus assets remaining after the discharge of the debts and liabilities of the Club shall be transferred to the local community for use by them in related community sports. The club shall then be declared dissolved.

Appendix 1

<u>Team</u>	<u>League</u>
Under 9's	West Lothian Soccer 7's
Under 10's	West Lothian Soccer 7's
Under 11's	West Lothian Soccer 7's
Under 12's	West Lothian Soccer 7's
Under 13's	West Lothian Youth League
Under 14's	West Lothian Youth League
Under 15's	West Lothian Youth League
Under 16's	West Lothian Youth League
Under 16's (Black)	West Lothian Youth League
Under 21's	Lanarkshire League
Juniors	East Region of the Scottish Junior Football Association

APPENDIX 5

<u>Team</u>	<u>League</u>
Under 9's	West Lothian Soccer 7's
Under 10's	West Lothian Soccer 7's
Under 11's	West Lothian Soccer 7's
Under 12's	West Lothian Soccer 7's
Under 13's	West Lothian Youth League
Under 14's	West Lothian Youth League
Under 15's	West Lothian Youth League
Under 16's	West Lothian Youth League
Under 16's (Black)	West Lothian Youth League
Under 21's	Lanarkshire League
Juniors	East Region of the Scottish Junior Football Association

Soccer School for ages 5 to 7

APPENDIX 6



GROUND & FACILITIES CRITERIA FOR ASSOCIATE MEMBERS OF THE SCOTTISH FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

1.1 Parking Facilities

There must be safe parking for Match Officials, team coaches and any visiting Directors.

1.2 Boundary Walls

The boundary wall and or fence must be of sound solid construction, secure on all sides and designed to obscure viewing from outside the ground. (Recommended height of boundary structure is 2 meters).

1.3 The Ground

The club must have the sole use of the ground or “shared” use approved by the Scottish Football Association and be in a position to establish security of tenure for the ground and to play matches as and whenever required. Each ground must be fully and securely enclosed. Where the ground forms part of a sport complex or otherwise then the football facilities must be self contained on match days. The ground must be available for the club to play at home throughout the playing season.

1.4 Turnstiles

The ground must be serviced with more than one turnstile to provide a safe, secure and if necessary a segregated controlled environment.

1.5 Signage

The ground must have clear signage to aid the general public. All exit gates and doors should be clearly identified, segregated and approved by the local authority.

1.6 The Field Area

The club is responsible for providing a properly maintained playing surface and a well maintained ground. The playing surface shall be constructed of natural grass, flat, level and well drained. The pitch dimensions must be in accordance with The Laws of the Game. Marking lines must be consistent throughout and a minimum of 50mm wide. Goals must be constructed of tubular aluminium with a maximum cross-sectional dimension of not less than 100mm or greater than 120mm in any direction. The interior dimensions of the goal shall measure 7.32m x 2.44m. Nets shall be suspended from the rear posts arranged at a minimum of 3 points behind the goals to provide an even shape of the goal net. The goal posts shall be erected vertically on all axis. The cross bar shall be level throughout its length.

1.7 Surrounding The Field

Playing field area to be defined with a permanent and adequate perimeter pitch protection system. There must be protected access to the playing field for teams and match officials.

Peripheral tracks must be constructed of materials that are not harmful to players and officials and the use of grass reinforcement agents that are capable of causing injury or accident are not permitted.

1.8 Spectator Area

It must be possible for spectators to be accommodated either standing or seated around the playing area. A covered area is required within the ground, which will accommodate in excess of 500 spectators either standing or seated or a combination of both. Public toilet facilities must be provided for all spectators occupying specific areas of the ground. Club's must establish via the relevant local authority the required number of toilet facilities which must be based on the guidance from the Sports Council "Toilet Facilities at Stadia, Planning Design and Types of Installation".

1.9 Dressing Rooms

Players' and officials' dressing rooms must be situated in an area designated as the main stand or building. Separate dressing rooms must be provided for each team and must each be capable of accommodating a minimum of 22 people. Each dressing room must have a shower area comprising at least four showerheads; one W.C; one wash hand basin with hot and cold running water. All dressing rooms must be heated, well-ventilated, free from damp, secure and maintained at all times in a good state of decoration. Match Officials' must have a dedicated separate dressing room with two showerheads and W.C facilities. It is unacceptable for Match Officials to share a dressing room with anyone else, including match officials from other games.

1.10 Disabled Supporters

Clubs must have a commitment to accommodate supporters with disabilities securely, safely and comfortably. Clubs must demonstrate that consultation has taken place with the local authority building control officer in relation to the facilities available within the ground and that these are to an acceptable standard.

1.11 Floodlighting

Clubs must have a floodlighting facility with a minimum capacity of 400 Lux.

1.12 Public Address System

There must be a public address system installed with adequate speaker output to relay information, particularly of an emergency nature, to all spectator areas.

1.13 Club's Responsibilities in Terms of Safety

The application of the appropriate Building Regulations, the Health & Safety at Work Act and any other relevant legislation. The local authority department responsible for safety must be consulted to determine the requirements with regard to Safety at Sports Grounds and the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work Act. In consultation with the fire and police authorities, the local authority must document the capacity of a safe venue.

APPENDIX 7

The project fits within the West Lothian Drug Action teams strategy for tackling drug misuse. One of the 5 related elements to drug prevention activities in West Lothian is the development of alternative activities for people at risk. One of the Action points is to involve local communities in building alternatives to substance misuse for young people. Given that West Lothian has Scotland's fastest growing young population and, that this target group is under enormous amounts of peer pressure, it is important to offer a variety of alternatives. We see this project as a strand of that strategy. Most importantly it keeps children off the streets and has the potential to divert them from anti social behaviour in the community. It is estimated that 90% of teenagers in Scotland drink alcohol at least occasionally. It is important that we invest in facilities that encourage children to take part in healthy activities and remain in those activities in years to come. We see our project as having the ability to encourage youngsters to enjoy sport in a safe environment and maintain that interest by offering them a facility that caters for all their requirements right through to adulthood.

APPENDIX 8

Proposal for preferential and community use of all-weather pitches;

Mondays to Fridays

Community 9:00am - 6:00pm

Blackburn United 6:00pm - 9:00pm

Community 9:00pm - 10:00pm

Saturdays

Blackburn United 9:00am - 6:00pm

Community 6:00pm - 10:00pm

Sundays

Blackburn United 9:00am - 4:00pm

Community 4:00pm - 10:00pm

APPENDIX 9

