

PITCHING
IN

PARTNERS WITH
SOUTHERN
FOOTBALL LEAGUE

MATCH DAY



EVESHAM UNITED FC
VS
CHICHESTER CITY FC

15 AUGUST
SATURDAY | **15:00**



SPIERS AND HARTWELL

Spiers & Hartwell



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2026/27

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"Evesham United Football Club is an unincorporated association"



FORD'S FOCUS



Good afternoon and a very warm welcome to the Spiers & Hartwell Stadium for today's Southern League Premier South fixture against Chichester City. I'd like to extend a welcome to the players, staff, and travelling supporters who have made the long journey up from West Sussex.

A Tale of Two Performances

We are only two games into the new league campaign, but we have already experienced the extreme highs and lows that this division has to offer.

- **The Good:** On opening day, we went to Basingstoke Town and put in an exceptional, front-foot performance. Winning 4-2 on the road gave the lads immense belief, encouragement, and a taste of the aggressive pressing identity we want to champion this season.
- **The Bad:** Fast forward to Tuesday night right here at home, and we suffered a severe reality check against Frome Town. To be completely honest, we didn't get out of first gear. We allowed them to be good, we gave up on our press, and we stopped matching their threat. Losing 4-0 at home hurts, and I take responsibility for how we set up and executed that plan.

Vital to Respond This Afternoon

In a grueling 42-game league season, you are bound to drop a few performances like Tuesday's. However, it keeps our feet firmly on the floor. What matters most now is how we react. It is absolutely vital that we produce a high-tempo, disciplined performance this afternoon to prove that the opening-day win wasn't a flash in the pan. We cannot afford back-to-back home defeats, and we need to show our supporters a proper reaction from the very first whistle.

Welcoming Chichester City

Today marks the first-ever competitive meeting between Evesham United and Chichester City. Like us, they are sitting on three points, having bounced back from an opening-day defeat to secure a tough 1-0 away win at Wimborne Town on Tuesday night. They are stable, dangerous, and will be full of confidence coming into our ground.

We have actively reshaped the squad over the last 48 hours to ensure we have the right energy, officially signing two new players and releasing two ahead of today's kick-off. The lads need to trust our system, stay on the front foot, and fight for the badge.

Get behind the boys from the stands today, make plenty of noise, and let's earn these three points together.

Enjoy the game.

— Mike Ford

Manager, Evesham United FC

THE THOUGHTS OF THE CHAIRMAN...



A warm welcome to everyone joining us today at The Spiers & Hartwell Stadium. I would like to extend a warm welcome to the officials, players, management, and travelling supporters of Chichester City. We hope you all had a safe journey to Worcestershire and enjoy your time with us today.

There is no hiding from the disappointment of Tuesday evening's 0-4 result against Frome Town. It was a tough night on our home pitch, and full credit must go to Frome, who showed why they were so formidable last season and took their chances well.

While the Scoreline hurt, it's vital we keep perspective so early in the campaign. We saw the potential and character in this squad during our opening away win against Basingstoke Town, and one defeat does not define what this team can achieve. Football moves quickly, and today gives us the immediate opportunity to respond, show our character, and get back on track.

I would also like to reiterate my thanks to all the volunteers, staff, supporters, and sponsors who worked tirelessly throughout the summer to get the stadium looking fantastic for this new season. Your effort behind the scenes remains standard-setting for this club.

The players and management team are determined to put in a performance today that reflects all that hard work. Your noise and vocal backing from the stands make a genuine difference, so let's get right behind the lads from the opening whistle. Enjoy the game, keep the faith, and let's aim for three points today!

Come on you Robins!

Micky- Chairman



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MATCH REPORT



**Saturday 8th August 2026 Southern League Premier South
Basingstoke vs EUFC**

A brilliant hat-trick by Robins striker Kai Churchley gave Evesham United just about the perfect start to their season at a sun-drenched Hampshire FA – Winklebury Football Complex, the home ground of Basingstoke Town FC. The Robins raced into a four-goal lead by the 78th minute, with midfielder Brandon Liggett getting into the goalscoring act too.

After a tentative opening from both sides, the home side began to seize control and missed a gilt-edged chance to go ahead in the 7th minute. Thomas Blake blazed high and wide when presented with a chance created by good work from the ever-lively Finn Evans. The Basingstoke forward line of Blake, Okine-Peters and Evans gave the Robins central pairing of Jyrel Bojang and Ioan Richards a particularly hard time, and they could have been two or three goals ahead by the 20-minute mark. The fact that they weren't owed much to good fortune and some brave last-ditch defending by the Evesham defence, where full-backs Liam Hutt and Owen Foye were outstanding.

However, goals change games, and this old cliché was never truer than in this encounter. The Robins had begun to turn the tide in terms of possession, if not chances created, by about the half hour mark and the lively Churchley put the Robins ahead in the 34th minute. A brilliant piece of centre forward play from Zidan Sutherland, Evesham's most recent acquisition, started the move that led to the goal. He expertly controlled a long ball played down the left channel and then played a deft inside pass to Amer Awadh, putting him in on goal. The Robins skipper unselfishly squared the ball to Churchley, who finished it clinically. The momentum was now with Evesham, and it was no surprise when they increased their lead in the 42nd minute. Brandon Liggett was the beneficiary of a misdirected shot by left back Owen Foye, presenting him, slightly fortunately, with a close-range opportunity that he converted easily. The only slight disappointment for the Robins was two yellow cards for Aaron Heap and Liam Hutt, given shortly before the break.

The 2-0 half-time lead may have flattered Evesham a little, and the result still felt very much in the balance. However, the Basingstoke manager Dan Brownlie made several early substitutions in the second half, introducing quite a few of their many new signings who had arrived in the summer. This disrupted his side's first half rhythm and, accordingly, the Robins became ever more comfortable and untroubled. The midfield trio of Brandon Liggett, Josh Barlow and Aaron Heap controlled midfield, and despite Sutherland and Adamh going off, the introductions of Roger James, Lewis Middleton and Josh McConnell didn't loosen Evesham's grip on the game. Brendan Beard, the Robins keeper, had little serious work to do in the second period as Basingstoke created little of note.



MATCH REPORT



Two superb finishes from hat-trick hero Kai Churchley in the 72nd and 78th minutes, the result of flowing Evesham counter-attacks, sealed the win. Mike Ford, the Evesham boss, and his players will be disappointed and frustrated, however, by the last few minutes. Even though the result was never much in doubt, Basingstoke scored in the 93rd and 95th minutes. Two good finishes from Lewis-Evans and Kokoszka that were probably down to Evesham taking their foot off the gas whilst in cruise control. Overall though, an excellent performance and great result for Evesham United. An encouraging start to the season that delighted the vocal away following from Worcestershire. They appreciated seeing their team back in the famous old red and white striped kit too!

ROBINS STARTING X1:

1 Brendan Beard (GK), 2 Liam Hutt (yc 45') (16 Rocco Naseef Sughayer 52'), 3 Owen Foye, 4 Josh Barlow, 6 Ioan Richards, 7 Aaron Heap (yc 45') (18 Lewis Middleton 70'), 9 Kai Churchley 34' 72' 78', 10 Amer Awadh (yc 23') (8 Josh McConnell 65'), 11 Brandon Liggett 42' (yc 48') (5 Antony McCormick 79'), 15 Jyrel Bojang, 20 Zidan Sutherland (C) (12 Roger Francis James 52')

ROBINS UNUSED SUBSTITUTES:

ATTENDANCE: 625

Match Report: Nick Hadley



MATCH REPORT



**Evesham United 0 vs Frome Town 4 – Southern League Premier Division South
Tuesday 11 August – Match Report by Simon Purfield**

Evesham United began their 2026/27 Southern League Premier South home campaign on Tuesday evening against fellow Robins Frome Town. The Somerset side arrived newly promoted from Step 4, having amassed 102 points and lost only twice away from home, and they proved formidable opponents.

The match began at a brisk pace, with Frome's Zak Drew testing Evesham goalkeeper Brendan Beard from long range, although the shot was comfortably saved. A minute later, Kai Churchley held up Owen Foye's long ball and laid it off to Zidan Sutherland on the edge of the box, but his shot drifted just wide of the visitors' goal. Drew was soon involved again, sending in a cross-shot that threatened to beat Beard before the goalkeeper tipped it over the bar. From the resulting right-wing corner, Harry Lucas steered a near-post header into the top corner to put Frome one to the good..

Evesham created an excellent chance shortly after the half-hour mark when Churchley raced through on goal, but Frome goalkeeper Phillips denied him with a sharp save. The rebound fell to Sutherland, who was unable to get a shot away.

Frome then launched a series of attacks on the Evesham goal. Sam Meakes headed narrowly over with the goal gaping, before another header from a Drew cross was cleared off the line by loan Richards.

The visitors capped an excellent first half by taking a one-goal lead into the break. Soon after the restart, Rocco Sughayer found captain Amer Awadh on the edge of the box, but his mishit shot went wide to the left.

Frome doubled their lead on the hour when Lucas headed home a free-kick from the left, meeting it near the centre of the six-yard box. The visitors continued to dominate possession until the 67th minute, when Churchley met a cross but saw his near-post effort comfortably saved by Phillips.

With 15 minutes remaining, Frome put the result beyond doubt. Three substitutes combined in a flowing move, with Zack Ali crossing to the back post for Harris Feltham to power a half-volley into the top-left corner.

Frome made it four in the 82nd minute. A superb move involving almost the entire team ended with a cross from the right, which the unmarked Feltham met inside the box and calmly finished into the net. It could have been five, but Beard produced a tremendous save to push a powerful drive around the post late on.



MATCH REPORT



It was a thoroughly deserved victory for the newly promoted side, who carried last season's momentum into the new campaign. Evesham have now opened the season with one win and one defeat, and next host divisional newcomers Chichester City on Saturday at 3pm.

ATTENDANCE: 393



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LEAGUE TABLE



	Team	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Points
1	Frome Town	2	2	0	0	6	0	6	6
2	Chertsey Town	2	2	0	0	5	1	4	6
3	Uxbridge	2	2	0	0	4	0	4	6
4	Hanworth Villa	2	2	0	0	3	0	3	6
5	Plymouth Parkway	2	1	1	0	8	1	7	4
6	Hanwell Town	2	1	1	0	4	3	1	4
7	Bath City	2	1	1	0	3	2	1	4
8	Yate Town FC	2	1	1	0	2	1	1	4
9	Taunton Town	2	1	0	1	5	4	1	3
10	Chichester City	2	1	0	1	2	2	0	3
11	Poole Town	2	1	0	1	2	2	0	3
12	Sholing FC	2	1	0	1	2	2	0	3
13	Berkhamsted	2	1	0	1	3	4	-1	3
14	Evesham United	2	1	0	1	4	6	-2	3
15	Bracknell Town	2	1	0	1	3	9	-6	3
16	Chippenham Town	2	0	1	1	1	3	-2	1
17	Malvern Town	2	0	1	1	4	7	-3	1
18	Gloucester City	2	0	0	2	2	4	-2	0
19	Gosport Borough	2	0	0	2	0	2	-2	0
20	Basingstoke Town	2	0	0	2	3	6	-3	0
21	Wimborne Town	2	0	0	2	0	3	-3	0
22	Havant & Waterlooville	2	0	0	2	0	4	-4	0

HOME FIXTURE LIST AUGUST

2026/27 1st Team



FROME TOWN

League

TUESDAY 11 AUGUST

KO 19:45



CHICHESTER CITY

League

SATURDAY 15 AUGUST

KO 15:00



PLYMOUTH PARKWAY

League

SATURDAY 29 AUGUST

KO 15:00

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2026-27**

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TBC

Emirates FA Cup 1st RQ

SATURDAY 05 SEPTEMBER

KO 15:00

EVESHAM UNITED FOOTBALL CLUB

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TEL: 01386 442303 or email: clubsecretary@eveshamunitedfc.com

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MEET THE MANAGEMENT



MIKE FORD – MANAGER

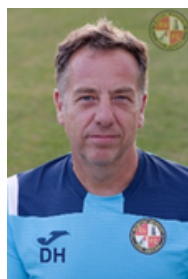
Mike, as a player, represented Cardiff City and Oxford United, clocking up close to 500 league appearances and gaining two promotions during that time. Following retirement due to injury, Mike has managed Oxford United (twice in caretaker roles) and was also assistant manager there for a period. He then went on to manage Oxford City (2009-2014), leading them to promotion to the National League Southern Division. He then moved to Banbury United (2015-2020), where he gained promotion from Evesham's level in 2016, before establishing them in the Premier Division from that point. He helped manage St. Ives Town in the 2021/22 season. Mike is a UEFA A-licensed coach who has experience working with and developing young players, including being the Oxford United Youth Team Manager.



ALEX SYKES – ASSISTANT MANAGER

In May 2011, Alex was appointed as manager of Bishop's Cleeve. In his first season as manager, he led Bishop's Cleeve to the club's then record high league finish of 11th in the Southern League South & West

At the end of his second season as boss, in April 2013, he stepped down from his role as manager at the club. In May 2013, he became joint manager at fellow Southern League club Shortwood United alongside John Evans. He would eventually take sole charge of the club following the retirement of John Evans at the end of the 2015-16 season. After leading the side for the 2016-17 season, he left Shortwood in April 2017. In January 2018, Alex was appointed as assistant manager of Redditch United. In October 2021, he was appointed manager of Cinderford Town and left at the end of the 2022-23 season. Alex started his playing career in the Football League with Mansfield Town. However, he is best known for his time at Forest Green Rovers from 1996 to 2004, where he played 295 times, scoring 73 goals in two spells and a loan. He was also a fans' favourite at Gloucester City, where he scored 60 goals in 160 appearances. Alex played for other teams such as Nuneaton Borough, Bath City, and Bishops Cleeve. He is a former England Futsal international.



DAN HEAD – GK COACH

Dan is an experienced coach and Head of Senior Goalkeeping at Evesham United. Having played academy football at an early age, Dan played the majority of his senior football at representative level in the Services, but stopped playing due to injury at a relatively young age. Turning his attention to coaching, he became an ECB-accredited cricket coach and was involved at the minor counties level before turning his focus back to football. Dan is a UEFA B-qualified outfield and goalkeeper coach and is also a member of the GK Nexus set-up. A small group of goalkeepers, mainly working in the professional game, who are mentored by former Derby and Manchester City goalkeeper Eric Steele, who was Sir Alex Ferguson's goalkeeper coach at Manchester United. Dan also works across the junior setup at Evesham United and previously coached at Cheltenham Town Academy.



STEVE COOK – COACH

Cook has had numerous roles at Evesham United for a number of years. He has acted as the manager of the U18 and Development sides but most recently acted as manager of Evesham United Reserves in the Hellenic Alliance West. Cook was added to the First Team coaching staff for the 2026/2027 season.

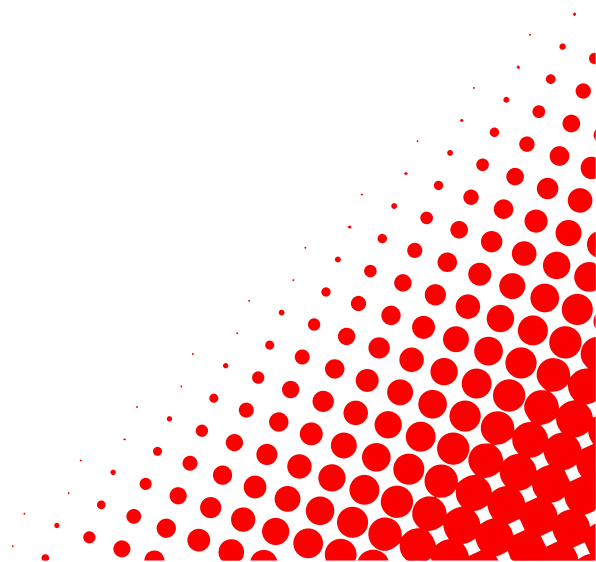


MEET THE MANAGEMENT



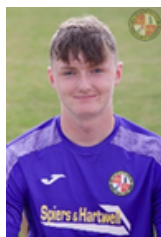
LIAM CHANDLER-JOHNSON – PHYSIO

Liam joined Evesham United during the 23/24 season, previously being at Longlevens AFC. With a background in Sports Therapy, he studied at Hartpury University. During this time, he went on placement with Cheltenham Town's 1st team. Using his experience working in





PLAYER PROFILES



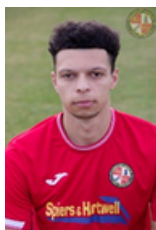
BRENDON BEARD – GOALKEEPER

Beard is a promising goalkeeper who rose through the ranks of the Evesham youth set-up before joining Cheltenham Town. He rejoined The Robins from Stoke Gifford United in 2024/25 but made no appearances due to injury. He returned fully fit for the 2025/26 season and provided cover for Alex Harris, keeping a clean sheet on his debut in a 1-0 win against Hanwell Town and made four appearances over the course of the season.



IOAN RICHARDS – DEFENDER

Richards is a Welsh-born defender who was on a short-term loan from Gloucester City at Swindon Supermarine. He signed at Gloucester City after a trial period in preseason, having previously been with Redditch United and Taunton Town, and had a previous short spell with Gloucester City in 2019. He was initially on a one-month loan until mid-October, which was extended until the end of the season, but Richards left City in December and joined Swindon Supermarine for the 2024/25 season. Ioan signed for The Robins permanently for the 2025/26 season, making 37 league appearances, scoring once. Ioan quickly became a staple of the side and fan favourite, winning both Evesham United Supporters' Club and Staff Player of the Season in his maiden season at the club.



JYREL BOJANG – DEFENDER

Jyrel joined Evesham from Pershore Town, where he was a standout at Step 5. Previously, he played at Studley. Jyrel is a solid defender at either full back or centre back when called from the bench or in the starting XI. Jyrel is into his third season at the club, making 38 appearances last season and 80 total appearances in that time.



LIAM HUTT – DEFENDER

Hutt came through the ranks of Swindon Town, making his debut for the club in the EFL Trophy against Reading. Hutt is able to operate across the back line but primarily operates from right back. He gained experience of senior football through a loan move to Weymouth in 2024-2025. Hutt joined Evesham United on loan in November 2025/26, making 28 appearances, scoring twice in that time. After impressing throughout the season Hutt signed permanently ahead of the 2026/27 season.



OWEN FOYE – DEFENDER

Foye also came through the ranks of Swindon Town and was a highly touted prospect, captaining their youth side. Foye made his debut for The Robins in 2024-25 in the EFL trophy against Tottenham Hotspur U21 and played one game in League 2, coming on as a late substitute away against Fleetwood. The left back impressed Ian Holloway in the 2025/26 pre-season and earned a work experience loan to Swindon Supermarine. He joined Evesham United on loan in November, making 20 appearances, netting once. Foye is no stranger to surging forward and creates chances from set-pieces and dangerous crosses. The 18 year old joined Evesham United permanently ahead of the 2026/27 season.



PLAYER PROFILES



ROCCO SUGHAYER – DEFENDER

Sughayer signed for Evesham United after impressing as a trialist in the person of the 2026/2027 season. The defender, previously of Bristol Rovers Academy and Forest Green Rovers Academy, was sent on loan to Didcot in the November of the 2025/2026 season on an initial one month loan. For The Railwaymen, the 18 year-old made 17 appearances across the season.



ANTHONY MCCORMICK – DEFENDER

McCormick spent 13 years as a junior at Swindon Town before being released at the close of the 2025/2026 season. He made his first team debut in November 2024, starting against Tottenham Hotspur U21 in the EFL Trophy at just 17. McCormick was loaned to National League South Salisbury in 2024/2025. The 19 year-old signed for Evesham for the 2026/2027 season.



JOSHUA BARLOW – MIDFIELDER

Barlow started his career at Cheltenham before making the move to the Salop Academy in the 2020/21 season. Whilst impressing in the middle of the park, Steve Cotterill, the Shrewsbury manager, took a shine to Barlow and rewarded him by naming him on the bench towards the end of the 21/22 season as a scholar. During the 22/23 season, he started three games in the EFL Trophy, making his debut in a 2-1 defeat against Wolverhampton Wanderers. Barlow went on to feature twice more in the same competition, with Shrewsbury eventually bowing out in the group stage. Despite the results in the EFL Trophy. He joined Banbury in June 2023 before leaving them in December. A solid member of the squad with good vision on the ball and vast passing range. Barlow has been an ever-present in Mike Ford's side across the past three seasons and has made 91 appearances. No stranger to a worldie, Barlow has scored 9 times for the club.



PLAYER PROFILES



AMER AWADH – MIDFIELDER

28-year-old Amer Awadh is an attacking midfielder who came through the youth system at Oxford City, playing primarily for their Nomads side, though he progressed to make a few first-team appearances. He had been playing for Fanja SC in Oman before joining Banbury United in February 2018, for whom he made 84 appearances. In 2021-22, he started the season at Nuneaton Borough before moving to North Leigh later that term, where he helped the club to promotion through the play-offs. For the Oxfordshire outfit, he turned out on 70 occasions, scoring 6 goals. Awadh captained the Robins promotion side in 2024/25 and continues in the role this season. He has become a stalwart of the club, making 134 appearances for the Robins, scoring 17 goals and creating many more with his elegant, mesmerising technical ability.



BRANDON LIGGETT – MIDFIELDER

Liggett started with Cheltenham Town Under 18s in the 2023/24 season before being loaned early in the year to Gloucester City. He made his Cheltenham Town debut against West Ham U21 in November 2023 in the EFL Trophy. Liggett signed a professional contract for Cheltenham in June 2024 and during the 2024/2025 season was sent on loan to Salisbury during the season on a one month deal. Liggett joined Evesham on a free transfer for the 2025/26 season. The combative Liggett made 38 appearances for The Robins last season.



LEWIS MIDDLETON – MIDFIELDER

18-year-old Lewis joined Evesham from Kidlington in 2024/25. In the playoff semi-final that season, Lewis had a breakout performance, coming on as a sub and netting twice against Exmouth, helping the Robins to overcome a 1-0 half-time deficit to win 4-1. He recently scored his first FA Cup goal for the Robins, hopefully the first of many. Lewis is often used as a super sub, causing our opponents' defence many problems with his speed and dribbling. Lewis is entering his third season under Mike Ford and has made 50 appearances in his first two seasons, netting 7 times.



AARON HEAP – MIDFIELDER

The versatile Heap joined Evesham United from North Leigh prior to the 2023/2024 season and became a regular member in Mike Ford's side. Heap played for Oxford United at youth level and made 3 appearances for Northern Ireland U19. He previously had a spell at Banbury United. Being deployed across the midfield, Heap made 113 appearances for the club before signing for Ardley United of Step 5 on dual registration in February 2026, though he made 2 appearances for the Robins in April amid an injury crisis, helping The Robins to retain Step 3 status.



PLAYER PROFILES



JOSH MCCONELL – MIDFIELDER

McConnell is a technical central midfielder who joined the club initially on loan from Oxford City in December of the 2025-26. McConnell made two appearances in the National League North for The Hoops against Bedford Town and Chester as a substitute. McConnell played 17 times for the Robins last season and scored once away at Havant and Waterloooville. McConnell joined the club permanently ahead of the 2026/27 season.



DANIEL HANSON – MIDFIELDER

Hanson joined the club after a successful trial period in preseason. Hanson plied his trade in both the Leicester City and Hamburger SV academies. He has previously played for Brimscombe and Thrupp and Hartbury University. Hanson most recently had spells with Slimbridge, where he scored a pivotal last minute winner from outside the box against Worcester Raiders, and for Pershore Town.



KAI CHURCHLEY – FORWARD

Kai had an excellent 4-year spell (2 years scholar and 2 years pro) with Bristol City, where he played a key role in the Robins' successful Under-21s team in the Professional Development League Two. Kai also had a loan spell with Gloucester City during their National League North campaign in 2023/24, before having a spell with Tiverton Town in the Southern League Premier South during the 2024/25 season. Kai comes to the Robins as a loan signing from Merthyr Town. The 21-year-old attacker joins the Robins on a deal that will run until at least the New Year.



PLAYER PROFILES



ZIDAN SUTHERLAND – FORWARD

Sutherland signed after impressing as a trialist in pre-season. The striker has had spells for Bromsgrove Sporting, Redditch United and Stourbridge at Step 3 as well as Stafford Rangers (whilst on loan from Hednesford) and Darlaston Town at Step 4. The experienced Sutherland, 24, brings Step 2 experience, having a spell in the National League South for Dover Athletic in 2023/2024, scoring 8 times for the club.

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Evesham United Foundation

August 2026

The Foundation continues to work for the benefit of the local community and to promote sport for all. Three major projects continue to be realised and the Foundation is thankful to all those individuals and companies who have made contributions both financial and materially. In addition, applications have been made to various trusts and sporting bodies to realise funds for these projects.



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Jewson Evesham have supplied a number of boards for the development of a marque facility and RedKite Property letting Agency have supported the Foundation as a long term benefactor.



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Please visit the Foundation website to read of the work being undertaken and how you can contribute to the projects over the coming months:

- To provide multi-sport kit bags to the 6 local primary schools for use in PE lessons and at play times – cost £1200
 - To plan and install a modern fitness suite at EUFC for use by the disabled learning group, the Academy section of U14 -18 players and as a 'private' sole use facility for club members and the general public – c£24000
- To provide additional kit for the 70 coaches now working for the club on a voluntary basis. - £4000

Foundation web site: www.eveshamunitedfoundation.co.uk

Or contact the CEO: ceo@eveshamunitedfoundation.co.uk



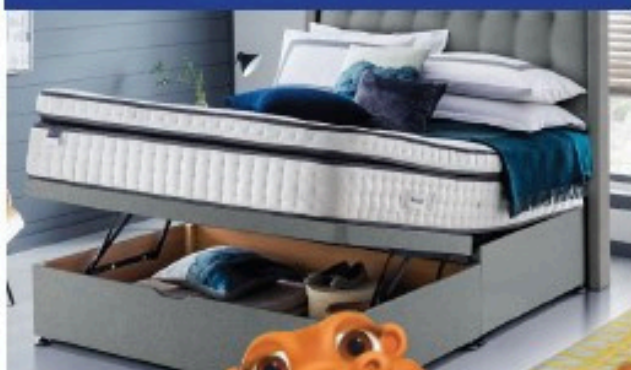
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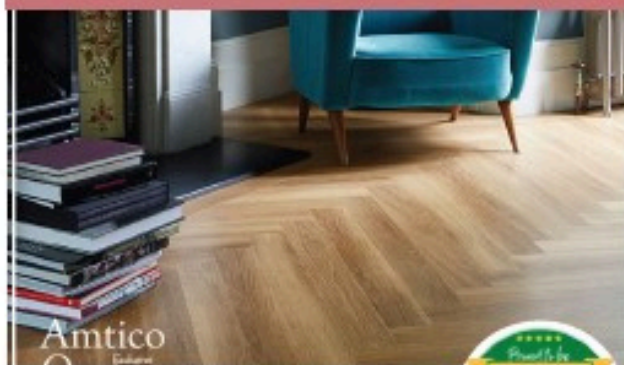
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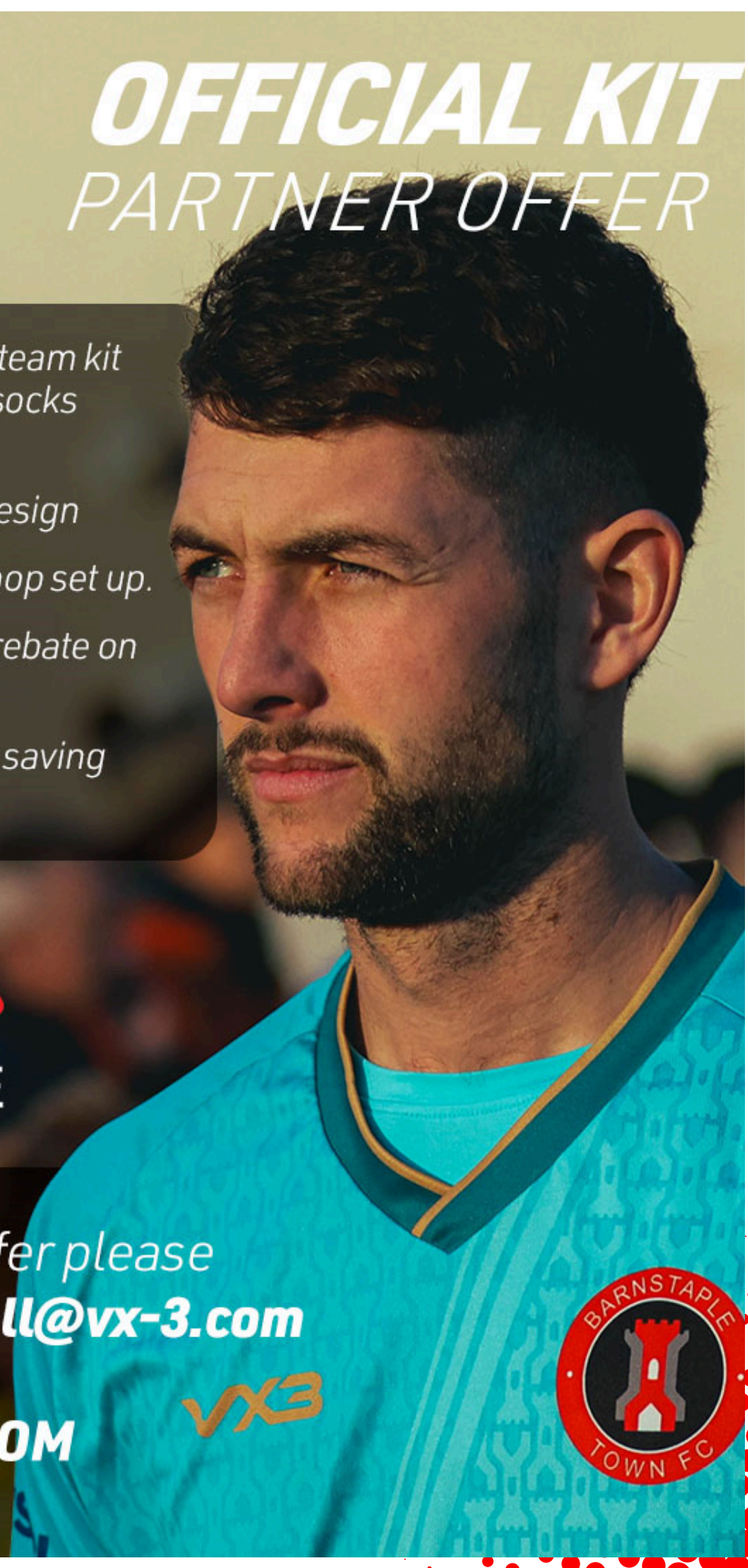




PLAYER APPEARANCES & GOALS 2026-27



	LEAGUE Starts	Subs	Goals	CUP Starts	Subs	Goals	TOTAL Starts	Subs	Goals
Aaron Heap	1	1					1	1	
Amer Awadh	2						2		
Antony McCormick		2						2	
Brandon Liggett	2		1				2		1
Brendan Beard	2						2		
Ioan Richards	1						1		
Josh Barlow	2						2		
Joshua McConnell	1	1					1	1	
Jyrel Bojang	2						2		
Kai Churchley	2		3				2		3
Lewis Middleton		2						2	
Liam Hutt	1	1					1	1	
Owen Foye	2						2		
Rocco Sughayer	1	1					1	1	
Roger James		2						2	
Zidan Sutherland	2						2		



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CHICHESTER CITY

CLUB HISTORY



The first Chichester Football Club was formed in 1873 and added the title 'City' to its name in 1948.

The club's original home was Priory Park, but it relocated to Oaklands Park in the early fifties.

The club was represented at the inaugural meeting of the Sussex County FA in 1882 and featured in the first-ever Sussex Senior Cup competition in the same year, losing 5-0 to Storrington. In 1896 Chichester became members of the newly formed West Sussex League and remained there until they joined the Sussex County League in 1920.

The first major honour was achieved in 1926 when they won the Sussex Senior Cup, but inter-war success was limited.

In 1960 Chichester clinched their first Sussex County League title and then retained it the following season, shared the Sussex RUR Cup with Brighton & Hove Albion after a 2-2 draw and reached the first round proper of the FA Cup, only to lose 11-0 to Bristol City. Chichester beat Eastbourne in the RUR Cup in 1964 and recaptured the league title in 1968.

In the 1970s Chichester's fortunes were mixed; the high point being another league championship in 1973 and a good run in the FA Amateur Cup. At the end of the decade, City faced relegation for the first time. However, the appointment of ex-Plymouth and Portsmouth player Richie Reynolds as manager sparked an amazing revival which saw City claw their way to safety. The following season was one of City's best ever as Reynolds masterminded a league championship win.

The club was relegated, though, in 1983 after a dismal season. Promotion and Division Two Cup success followed in 1985, but they returned to the Second Division for the 1987-88 campaign, winning the Division Two Challenge Cup again in 1988.

Steve White took over as manager in 1990, and the side enjoyed another promotion campaign alongside Division Two Challenge Cup success. The club struggled for several seasons in the County League top flight before again being relegated to Division Two in 1994. In 1997, City returned to the top flight after finishing runners-up. Permission was finally granted for floodlights at Oaklands Park, and they remained in the top flight of the Sussex County League in one guise or another for over twenty years.

Following a millennium merger with Portfield FC, the club became known as Chichester City United FC and in 2004 Adie Girdler and his assistant Gary Brockway led Chichester to their first Sussex County League title since 1980. The club also won the Brighton Charity Cup in 2005 and 2006 and the RUR Cup for a third time in 2007. At the start of the 2009-2010 season, following discussions with Chichester District Council, it was agreed to revert to the name of Chichester City FC as this more clearly reflected the club and the city.

CHICHESTER CITY CLUB HISTORY



The club faced challenges after this, both on and off the pitch, for a number of years. However, the management team of Miles Rutherford, Graeme Gee and first team coach Danny Potter has transformed things at Chi in all sorts of ways. A top five finish in the Southern Combination Football League Premier Division in 2015-16 was followed by a third place spot in 2016-17, a six-month unbeaten run in the league and a record-equalling 4th round appearance in the FA Vase. Chichester went one round better in the Vase the following season, losing 1-0 to 1874 Northwich in the last minute of the game.

Chi won the RUR Cup in the 2017-18 season, beating local rivals Pagham 4-0 in the final at Culver Road, and gained promotion to Step 4 of the non-league football pyramid for the first time in the club's history after clinching the SCFL Premier Division title in 2018-19.

Darin Killpartrick joined the coaching staff at Chichester in the summer of 2019, and an exceptional start to life in the Isthmian League was complemented by an extraordinary FA Cup adventure as City progressed through six rounds of qualifying to make it to the first round proper of the competition – a run in which Chichester beat three Step 3 sides.

And in a unique FA Cup first round draw, Chichester, the lowest-ranked team left in the competition, were given the bye into the second round, only to lose 5-1 away at Tranmere Rovers in a match broadcast live on BT Sport.

That first league campaign was curtailed by COVID, as was the subsequent season, but in 2021-22 Chichester finished 11th in the table and 10th in 2022-23.

A year later Chichester went on an amazing late run of 13-games unbeaten to finish the regular campaign in the last play-off spot. They beat runners-up Ramsgate away in the semi-final 1-0 thanks to a Mo

Jammeh 87th minute winner, and thrashed Three Bridges 5-0 at Jubilee Field in the final to get promoted to the Isthmian premier division – a first ever Step 3 appearance for the club.



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REFRESHED, recharged and ready to go – the full 2026-27 season is, at last, officially set for kick-off.

Of course, Step 5&6 clubs are already on the go – some have even played three or four games – ahead of the, slightly later than usual, FA Cup start this weekend.

But as well as the extra preliminary round beginning – and keep an eye out for Step 4 clubs starting cold against lower tiered opponents whose engines are fully running – the new campaign for Steps 1-4 are also under starter's orders.

At last. The World Cup was good in patches but there's nothing quite like a full fixture list. All the pre-season talk, the hopes and expectations are about to be fully tested when the first ball gets banged into your penalty area with the sun, no doubt, beating down.

Who will get off to a flyer? Who will thrive in the early months but fall away when the weather gets ugly? Who will stumble out of the blocks but regain their composure? Whatever league you are most interested in, you will have your favourites and dark horses. But the beauty of Non-League football is, despite the annual budget talk, the unexpected always happens.

Can Boreham Wood, minutes away from promotion last term, shake-off any potential hangover and start fast? How will the new Step 4 teams get on? Who will make the most of a reprieve?

This year brings another level of interest with the expansion of the play-offs at Steps 3&4 from four teams to six.

It will mirror the format used by the National League and Steps 1 and 2 that has been largely deemed a success.

The champions will go up as usual with second and third receiving byes into the semi-finals where they will face victors from the fourth v seventh game and fifth v sixth eliminator games.

Is it fair? Well, no play-off system is. But they do keep more seasons alive for longer. When clubs are fighting for every pound note they can get, having plenty at stake at the back end of the season can only be a good thing to draw in the punters.

That's for down the line after the long winter months. For now we'll enjoy watching game with the sun on our necks.

Once again, we're relishing covering every kick along the way in The NLP every Sunday. Along with the usual in-depth coverage our readers have come to expect, we've got some new features up our sleeve to. Make sure you grab a copy each week – even better, subscribe! So here we go! Have fun and enjoy the season.

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THOMAS CONTEH

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Next Home Match: Saturday 29th August 2026 vs. Plymouth Parkway
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