



vs CONGLETON TOWN
13/10/26 - 7:45PM
NPL WEST
OFFICIAL MATCH DAY
PROGRAMME



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Northwich Community Football Club, trading as 1874 Northwich Football Club, operates under the model of a Community Benefits Society. Registration no.: 32017R

14 Boundary Lane North, Cuddington, Northwich, Cheshire, CW8 2PL

STADIUM: The Creative Hut Stadium, Townfield Lane, Barnton, Northwich, Cheshire, CW8 4LH

Visit

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FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/1874Northwich

X/TWITTER: www.x.com/1874Northwich

COLOURS:

HOME: Green shirts, black shorts, green socks

AWAY: Violet shirts, violet shorts, violet socks

HONOURS:

MFL PREMIER DIVISION PLAY-OFFS 2026

NWCFL CHALLENGE CUP 2019, 2020

MID-CHESHIRE DISTRICT FA CUP 2015-16, 2016-17

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PRESIDENT: Brian Edge

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VICE-CHAIR & TREASURER: John Coats

SOCIAL AND FUNDRAISING: Mick Ward

FOOTBALL PATHWAY: Peter Flaherty

WELCOME TO TOWNFIELD

PITCHING IN NPL WEST

VS CONGLETON TOWN

TUESDAY 13TH OCT 2026 | K.O. 7:45PM



FAN ENGAGEMENT: Mark Davies

COMMERCIAL & MARKETING: Andrew Dignum

MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS: Jack Owen

OTHER CONTACTS:

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MEDIA: Mark Davies, Jack Owen & Callum Waters

WEBSITE: Mark Edgeley

MANAGEMENT AND STAFF:

MANAGER: Rory Fallon

ASSISTANT MANAGER: Danny Moss

COACH: James Stokes

COACH: Lee Jones

GOALKEEPING COACH: Tom Reed

HEAD PHYSIO: Phil Lea

PHYSIO: Harris Koon Hang Lee

KIT MANAGER: Andy Williams

SECRETARIAL MUSINGS

VICKI ENGLAND



We're back at Townfield and tonight, we extend a warm welcome to our Cheshire neighbours from Congleton. The Bears are having a slightly tricky first part of the season, like us, but they visit on the back of a draw at Runcorn Linnets on Saturday so I'm sure they will be buoyed by a decent point there. I have a lot of respect for Congleton Town, I saw first hand how they operated when we met many times in the NWCFL, in fact they generally always won the Respect Award for how they went about things and year on year, they have progressed on and off the field. They took the Midland League by storm when they were laterally moved into it and won promotion to the NPL West, replacing us in the process! A really good club, great volunteers and lovely hospitality every visit.

I'd especially like to give a welcome to one of my biggest football friends, their Secretary Ken. Ken and I immediately built a rapport many years ago, when 1874 was hosted by Congleton in a pre-season friendly during our first summer. Over the ensuing years, we've shared information, our thoughts and have helped each other with guidance. Indeed, when we were relegated to the Midland League and Congleton were heading upwards to the NPL West, Ken and I spoke at length as to what we should expect from our respective new leagues, which we both appreciated. Ken, you were spot on with what you told me!

Well, what's happened since my last notes? We've faced two difficult games at opponents who have hit the ground running in the first few weeks of the season. It

couldn't have been tougher last Tuesday, when we headed over to Merseyside to take on the unshakable league leaders, Bootle. We then visited fourth placed Shifnal at the weekend. Now, I can only go off what I've read on the match updates and social media posts about both games, as I have had a few days away, but to read that we've played well for large parts of both games and indeed took the lead in both, was very positive. It seems that we just run out of steam, made some odd mistakes, and let them back in which meant that we came away with nothing.

I can tell you that there is no-one more disappointed than Rory over results, and he along with his management team, are working hard to try and keep improving the situation. The guys have taken our club on, knowing that 1874 is one of the smallest 'fishes in the pond' and that we don't have an abundance of resources to go and buy our way out of a tricky situation, so it's about hard work, connections, bringing in players who they feel can improve what we are doing and working with the squad to look at individual aspects of our games where we could have done better or more. And highlighting where we have done well! Rory inherited six players from the promotion winning squad, so that was always going to be some rebuild!

Our club is all about the fans, and it is at times like these when results are not going our way in this much tougher league, where 1874 needs the backing even more. I want to thank everyone who has followed the

lads in good numbers away from home, everyone appreciates it. And when we are back at Townfield, be as noisy and encouraging as you can. All in it together! I do read what's written on the supporters' forum or on other social media platforms and you won't get answers to some of your questions or thoughts on there, so why not come and chat. Hopefully, we can arrange a supporters catch up soon.

We're heading to Runcorn Linnets on Saturday and will then be back here next Tuesday, to host Witton Albion in the Cheshire Cup. These games are coming thick and fast!

We're looking to finalise the numbers for our Beer Festival, as the folks need to order in the right amount of beer so if you are going and haven't yet ordered your ticket, please sort asap as it will really help with arrangements.

That's it for now, enjoy the game and thanks for your support.

"Come on you Green Boys!"



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MATCH REPORT

SHIFNAL TOWN 3-1 1874 NORTHWICH

Andre Landell scored twice for the hosts to complete the turnaround on 1874 after James Simms scored his seventh in as many appearances to deservedly give '74 the lead.

'74 travelled to Shropshire to face Fourth placed Shifnal Town, buoyed by an positive packed performance at runaway league leaders Bootle on Tuesday; albeit one we left without any points in.

The management team wanted a fast start from 1874, and they got it.

Fast and fluid attacking football put Shifnals defence on the back foot and sustained pressure was building.

Tom Mitchell blasted a stinging effort into the legs of a defender who denied a certain goal.

Evra Yao was next to go close, he drove inside and his shot was deflected into the grateful keepers gloves.

Shifnal forced the first meaningful save on a counter attack; Shaq Whittingham curled an effort which Max Beddow had to be at full stretch to tip over.

Kenny Mwaliteta was playing with flair, his rabona cross into the box was met by Mike Ibeto who got underneath his header and it went wide.

Breakthrough came through the man in form; a neat passing move found James Simms in space. He dropped his right shoulder and cut inside from the left, a low arrowed finish gave Dougie Blight in the hosts goal no chance.

1874 didn't stop. Kenny Mwaliteta had a shot saved by Blight excellently as we tried to make our dominance count.

Ola Ibrahim then had a powerful drive from 30 yards tipped wide by Blight. A second was surely on its way?

Unfortunately not. From the resulting corner Shifnal broke down field, Zeli Ismail went over the desperate stab of the leg by Kenny Mwaliteta. Penalty to Shifnal.

Up stepped Andre Landell to rattle in a neat finish inside the right side netting. One each.

Shifnal were galvanised. Alfie Friars had to head off the line to ensure we didn't go into the break trailing.

The second half begun and Blight was at it again – his reflex pawing save to deny Courtney Duffus a first goal in 1874 colours was the next in a collection on his debut.

The game hit a lull. It was a slugfest in midfield.

Shifnal took the lead on the 74th minute. Mike Ibeto hurled a long throw into their box. They battered clear and the flight took Noel Brindle by surprise.

They managed to get a 3 on 1 advantage, Chay Tilt produced an outstanding outside the foot cross over to the back post which picked out Andre Landell who thumped a volley over Beddow.

The game was put beyond any doubt as Alamu-Tajudeen was left unmarked to head into the net.

The final whistle sounded another loss for '74. We remain in 20th place with 21st place Congleton Town visiting Townfield on Tuesday night.

A huge game in the early context of the season, the lads will need all the supporters behind them on Tuesday – loud and proud.

BIG GAME PREVIEW

GARRY CLARKE

1874 NORTHWICH vs CONGLETON TOWN

PITCHING IN NPL WEST

1874 Northwich host Congleton Town at Townfield in an all-Cheshire NPL West game.

Last Season, Congleton finished 18th in the NPL West, one point above the relegation zone, with a record of:

	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts	Pos
CT	42	10	14	18	60	72	44	18

After last Saturday's games, The Bears are 21st in the NPL West table, one point and one place below 1874, although they have played one game less.

	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts	Pos
1874	13	1	4	8	14	27	7	20
CT	12	1	3	8	10	22	6	21

Last Saturday, they drew 2-2 at Runcorn Linnets.

CONGLETON TOWN FACT FILE

Formed	1901
Ground	Cleric Stadium, Booth Street
Colours	Black, White and Yellow
Change colours	Purple
Nickname	The Bears
Manager	Richard Duffy
2025/26	18th NPL West

PREVIOUS MEETINGS

1874 Northwich have played Congleton Town on 17 previous occasions (plus one friendly), which is more than they have played any other team.

HEAD TO HEAD RECORD

	P	W	D	L	GF	GA
Home	8	4	2	2	14	12
Away	9	7	1	1	26	13
Total	17	11	3	3	40	25

FAMILIAR FACES

Two former 1874 players have played for Congleton Town this season, Taylor Kennerley and Joe Woolley.

DID YOU KNOW

Having initially joined the Cheshire County League in 1920, Congleton Town were the competition's last champions in 1982, before the league merged with the Lancashire Combination to form the North West Counties Football League.

A BIT ABOUT CONGLETON

Congleton is a market town and civil parish in the borough of Cheshire East on the River Dane.

The town's name is of unknown origin. The first recorded reference to it was in 1282, when it was spelt Congelton. The element Congle might relate to the old Norse kang meaning a bend, followed by the Old English element tun meaning settlement.

The town is mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086, where it is listed as Cogeltone: Bigot de Loges.

Congleton became known for bear baiting in the 1620s, hence Congleton's nickname Beartown.



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300+ CLUB

AUGUST 2026 DRAW

The monthly prize draw was carried out at Townfield on 31st August at half-time of the match against Vauxhall Motors, with the winning numbers being drawn out by officials from our visitors as follows:

The winners will be contacted to provide their bank details should they not already be held by the Treasurer.

Participating in the 300+ Club is a fantastic way of supporting the Club throughout the whole year and you get the chance to win a cash prize each month!

Thanks to all members of the 300+ Club – now more than ever, the money raised helps to keep the Football Club going forward.

Prize	No.	Winner
£200	248	Azariah Goodison
£100	41	Fred Shallcross
£50	138	Gary Bunby
£50	307	Debbie Richardson
£50	86	Richard Webb
£50	371	Paul Gleave

300+ Club

CARD OF THE WEEK

COURTESY OF BLUE BREAKS HOBBY SHOP

The 'Card of the Week' for our NPL West fixture against Congleton Town is the Topps Merlin 2022/23 Paul Gascoigne Rangers autograph.

The card is from a legends range after Gazza's retirement from football. It is a premium card, with a chrome finish, and features a Topps certified Paul Gascoigne autograph.

Priced at £40, it is a great card for an autograph collection.

Come into our shop at the Congleton game to see, and maybe purchase, an English football legend's card.



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VOLUNTEERS

VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES AT 1874

Catering

As we approach the new season, we are looking for people to help out in the Cafe at home matches. There is no requirement for you to commit to every home match, but it would be good to get a few people on a rota to serve food and drinks. Typically this involves being at the ground at least 1.5 hours before kick off to set up, but most of the work is complete just after half time. For more information or to volunteer, please speak to Maggie Coats or any of the Board Members.

Stewards

We hope that playing in the NPL-West Division will see larger away followings and greater crowds at home matches. This brings additional challenges, not least managing parking around the ground. We are looking

for car parking stewards to monitor parking on Townfield and the surrounding streets before and just after kick off. If you don't mind helping out occasionally, that would be a great help. For further information, or to volunteer, please speak to John Coats.

Photographer

We are looking to recruit a voluntary club photographer. Please contact the club at society@1874northwich.com or media@1874northwich.com if you are interested in this position.

If anyone can help or you need further details, please contact Maggie Coats (07808765110), society@1874northwich.com or you can contact us via the website at: [Volunteering at 1874 | 1874 Northwich F.C.](#)

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BUDGET BOOSTERS

ROLL OF HONOUR

The Boost the Budget scheme for the 2026/27 season opened on 1 July 2026, and we are asking as many supporters as possible to get involved. You can make a one-off donation of £10 or more, or you can commit to a monthly contribution of £5, £10, £15, £20, £25 or £50 by standing order over a 10-month period from July 2026 through to April 2027.

Everyone who contributes will be recognised in our Boost the Budget Roll of Honour, featured in the match day programme and weekly newsletter unless anonymity is preferred.

If you would like to get involved, making a contribution is straightforward. One-off donations can be made via online banking using the reference BTB2627. Alternatively, you can set up a standing order for ten

monthly payments (July 2026 to April 2027) to the following account:

Account Name: Northwich Community Football Club Limited

Sort Code: 08-92-99

Account Number: 67298321

If you would prefer to discuss the scheme or find out more, please don't hesitate to contact Andrew Dignum on 07747 872 241 or via email at commercialdirector@1874northwich.com.

We have earned our place back at Step 4. Now it is time to attack it—together.

Let's back Rory. Let's back the lads. Let's back the club.

And most importantly, let's make this our biggest Boost the Budget yet.

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A huge thank you to everyone who has sponsored a player or a member of our management team this season:

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James Stokes	Easi-Pay
Lee Jones	Frank Kirkham
Phil Lea	Tony Fallows
Harris Lee	1874 Forum
Andy Williams	Farral Cleaners
Max Beddow	Elite Riff Raff
Elliott Coleman	'Ever Glorious' Programme
Ben Crane	Elite Palates Studio, Blakemere Village
Courtney Duffus	1874 Walking Footballers In memory of Roger Oxley and Tommy Ward
Niall Fallon	Howard Leonard, James Leonard and Col Robbins
Mike Ibeto	Richard Webb
Mark Jones	Elite Riff Raff In memory of Gary Halvorsen
Henry McNulty	Trusthouze Legal Services
Tom Mitchell	Wilson Family
Brad Mundy	Seymour Construction Ltd t/a Redituff Ltd
Kenny Mwaliteta	Owen Family
Simon Njaria	Six Degrees of Football
Niall Osborne	Jack Hazeldine
Kevin Spinelli	Northwich Mastiff
Matt Woolley	Sunday Lunch Club
Evra Yao	Preston 74 Fan Club

There are still players available to sponsor, for more details please email John Costs (treasurer@1874northwich.com)

Response	Percentage
Doing a good job	85%

[illegible]

1874 NORTHWICH 2026/27 PLAYER STATS

AS OF 10/10/26

		2026/27 SEASON					ALL-TIME					
		Starts	Subbed	Sub On	Unused	Goals	Starts	Subbed	Sub On	Unused	Goals	Total Apps
ALLEN	Ellis	30	0	0	1	0	30	0	0	3	0	30
AMOS	David	1	1	3	3	0	1	1	3	3	0	4
ATHERTON	Alfie	2	1	2	0	0	2	1	2	0	0	4
BEDDOW	Max	17	0	0	0	0	17	0	0	0	0	17
BELL	Cameron	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
BLAKE	Joe	4	0	4	1	0	4	0	4	1	0	8
BRINDLE	Noel	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
CLARKE	John	2	1	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	2
CRANE	Ben	6	4	5	0	2	6	4	5	0	2	11
COLEMAN	Elliott	5	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	5
DUFFUS	Courtney	3	1	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	3
EDWARDS	Lucas	2	1	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	2
FALLON	Niall	13	4	1	0	0	13	4	1	0	0	14
FARMER	Lewis	6	6	9	0	0	6	6	9	0	0	15
FRIARS	Alfie	3	2	0	0	0	3	2	0	0	0	3
IBETO	Mike	10	0	2	0	0	24	6	7	5	0	31
IBRAHIM	Ola	2	2	2	0	0	2	2	2	0	0	4
IGOE	Will	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1
JONES	Mark	8	3	0	0	1	326	30	6	6	14	332
LYNN	Harry	3	3	4	3	1	3	3	4	3	1	7
MCGRATH	John	7	6	2	1	1	37	21	10	1	8	48
MITCHELL	Tom	11	1	0	0	0	27	2	1	1	1	28
MUNDY	Brad	1	1	8	0	0	1	1	8	0	0	9
MWALITETA	Kenny	15	7	2	0	1	15	7	2	0	1	16
NJARIA	Simon	6	5	3	0	0	6	5	3	0	0	9
OSBORNE	Niall	16	1	0	0	0	93	9	2	0	1	95
ROBINSON	Blake	14	4	1	1	0	14	4	1	1	0	15
SIMMS	Jim	6	0	1	0	7	6	0	1	0	7	7
SPINELLI	Kevin	12	10	3	0	2	12	10	3	0	2	15
WOOD	Josh	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	2
WOOLLEY	Jack	0	0	6	0	0	19	14	54	28	3	73
WOOLLEY	Matt	5	5	3	5	0	423	86	51	39	51	474
YAO	Evra	7	6	5	0	2	7	6	5	0	2	12

NPL-WEST 2026/27 LEAGUE TABLE

AS OF 10/10/26

		HOME				AWAY			GF	GA	Pts
		P	W	D	L	W	D	L			
1	Bootle	11	5	0	0	5	0	1	30	8	30
2	Prescot Cables	12	2	4	0	5	0	1	23	11	25
3	Stafford Rangers	9	4	0	1	4	0	0	22	7	24
4	Shifnal Town	12	3	0	2	5	0	2	24	18	24
5	Hanley Town	11	5	0	1	2	1	2	25	13	22
6	Clitheroe	11	3	1	2	4	0	1	19	14	22
7	Witton Albion	11	4	2	2	2	0	1	23	12	20
8	Mossley	13	4	1	2	2	1	3	20	19	20
9	Wythenshawe	13	4	0	2	1	4	2	20	21	19
10	Padiham	14	2	2	3	2	3	2	20	27	17
11	Nantwich Town	14	2	2	3	2	2	3	27	26	16
12	Kids Grove Athletic	13	3	1	2	2	0	5	16	20	16
13	Stalybridge Celtic	12	2	1	2	2	2	3	20	21	15
14	Chasetown	13	2	1	3	1	4	2	25	26	14
15	Runcorn Linnets	13	2	2	2	1	3	3	17	22	14
16	Newcastle Town	10	2	1	1	2	0	4	22	16	13
17	Lower Breck	10	3	0	2	1	1	3	16	17	13
18	Atherton Collieries	9	1	1	3	3	0	1	14	16	13
19	Vauxhall Motors	12	1	2	4	1	3	1	14	23	11
20	1874 Northwich	13	1	3	2	0	1	6	14	28	7
21	Congleton Town	12	0	2	4	1	1	4	10	22	6
22	Lichfield City	14	0	0	7	2	0	5	14	48	6

NPL-WEST 2026/27 RESULTS GRID

AS OF 10/10/26

	1874 Northwich	Atherton Collieries	Bootle	Chasetown	Clitheroe	Congleton Town	Hanley Town	Kids Grove Athletic	Lichfield City	Lower Breck	Mossley	Nantwich Town	Newcastle Town	Padiham	Prescot Cables	Runcorn Linnets	Shifnal Town	Stafford Rangers	Stalybridge Celtic	Vauxhall Motors	Witton Albion	Wythenshawe
1874 Northwich	x			2-0								0-3	2-2	0-1					2-2	1-1		
Atherton Collieries	1-1	x					1-0				2-4			0-1						1-2		
Bootle	6-3		x					1-0				2-0	4-2						2-0			
Chasetown				x			2-4	1-2	3-2					2-0	3-4				2-2			
Clitheroe				3-2	x	3-4				0-1						1-1			2-1	2-0		
Congleton Town			0-1			x			0-1						0-2		1-2			1-1		0-0
Hanley Town	3-0		1-0	2-3		x	2-1						3-2									3-0
Kids Grove Athletic						2-1		x	2-0	1-1		1-4		1-0			0-1					
Lichfield City				1-2		1-5		x		1-4		1-5						0-3	0-5		1-6	
Lower Breck		6-1	0-4					4-1	x						0-1		2-0					
Mossley	3-2			0-1		2-1				x	1-1				3-2	0-1					1-0	
Nantwich Town		1-2		2-2		4-0					x				1-3	3-1					0-3	2-2
Newcastle Town	1-0			1-1								x					3-0		0-2			
Padiham	2-0									4-0	1-1	0-5	x		2-2	1-4	0-4					
Prescot Cables					1-0			5-0					1-1	x	1-1					1-1		1-1
Runcorn Linnets		1-2	0-2	1-1		2-2				3-2						x			4-2			
Shifnal Town	3-1			1-4	1-2				4-2			3-2					x					
Stafford Rangers								2-1		3-0	3-1						0-4	x				3-1
Stalybridge Celtic		0-4				1-0	1-1	3-1											x			0-1
Vauxhall Motors			0-4	2-2				2-4		2-1	3-3						0-1	0-2		x		
Witton Albion			2-4			3-1		2-0	2-0			1-0	1-1						2-3		x	1-1
Wythenshawe									0-3	2-0		4-3	4-5			1-0	3-0					x



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CONGLETON HISTORY

A HISTORY OF CONGLETON TOWN

Congleton Town Football Club was founded in 1901. It was effectively an offspring of the late Congleton Juniors' squad bolstered by other local, amateur players with a view to creating a new town representative side, as indicated by its choice of club title, to fill the void left by the Congleton Hornets following that club's demise through financial difficulties in April 1900. The team initially played its matches on the Chaddock-Lowndes field at the top of Booth Street before moving to its current site on the upper-half of adjacent West Field in the summer of 1903. The first Town team, known as the 'Townies', was a fine young side and included a 16 years old Hugh Moffat amongst its ranks, a full back who went on to play at the highest level and who remains the only Congleton born-and-bred footballer to have represented his country in a full international match. In those early days the team first sported red jerseys, then later claret and blue before adopting their famous black & white striped kit in 1920.

This vibrant young side immediately claimed a hat-trick of Crewe & District League titles prior to being accepted for the North Staffordshire & District League in 1905, where they finished as runners-up in 1915 and then champions in 1920 following the resumption of football after the Great War. Other successes prior to WWI were a Crewe & District Cup win in 1904 and consecutive triumphs in the Cheshire Amateur Cup in 1906 and 1907. They were also beaten finalists in the Cheshire Amateur Cup in 1904 and 1909, and the Burslem Cup in 1913. In 1920 the club moved up to the Cheshire County League, then an elite league ranked just below the Football League. This switch coincided with the return to the club of Hugh Moffat, now in the twilight of his long career, who inspired the team to a runners-up spot in the league and a first-

ever victory for the town of Congleton in the prestigious Cheshire Senior Cup when Winsford were beaten 1-0, with Moffat heading a goal-bound effort off the line in the final minute. This period also saw the introduction of accommodation at the football ground with the acquisition of an ex-Army Hut for changing rooms in 1920 and the building of a unique, wooden stand circa 1923. The latter, constructed by the aptly-named James Standeven, incorporated replacement changing rooms and a communal bath, in addition to providing sheltered spectator seating and a press box. It then served the club for the next 70 years. Although the club also finished as league runners-up the following season their successes leading up to the outbreak of WW2 in 1939 were limited to a further Cheshire Senior Cup win against Crewe Alexandra in 1938 following two replays and being the beaten finalists in that cup in 1928 and 1934, and the League Cup in 1928.

The Cheshire County League was suspended following the declaration of war, but the club did compete in the local Macclesfield & District League in 1939-40 finishing in equal first place with Bollington, eventually emerging as champions following a play-off. The club also won the Sentinel Cup in 1939. Following the resumption of football after WW2 the club once again participated in the Cheshire County League. However, the team perpetually struggled to compete at this level, always languishing in the bottom half of the table, culminating in a bottom finish in 1965 that saw them controversially voted out of the league. Their games did attract big crowds though. In particular, the local derbies versus Macclesfield Town when spectators turned up in their thousands. Indeed, the ground's highest ever attendance is reputedly an estimated 7,000 for this derby in 1954. That said a far more

plausible nominee for that record is the definite crowd of 5,448 that turned up at Booth Street on 7th April 1950 against the same opponents. In April 1949 the club sold their star player, inside-forward Desmond Frost, to Leeds United for a fee of £1K, the equivalent of £36K in 2021 money. That fee was, and still is, a club transfer record and it just happened to be the exact amount of money required to facilitate the club's immediate purchase of the ground from the Lowndes-Yates family. Three seasons in the lowly Manchester League then followed before the club switched to the Mid Cheshire League in 1968. This proved to be a successful period for the club on the pitch under the guidance of ex-player Roy Campbell but the club's perilous financial situation resulted in the ground being sold off to the Congleton Corporation for the sum of £4.5K early in 1971. The club had been desperate and, not for the first time, on the verge of collapse.

Conversely the team, made up of quality local amateur players, was in great shape and it finished champions of the Mid-Cheshire League in 1974, 1976 and 1978; runners-up in 1970, 1972 and 1977; and won the League Cup in 1972 and 1978. They also won the Bartlett Memorial Trophy in 1972, and the Cheshire Amateur Cup in 1978. In 1978 the club re-joined the Cheshire County League. This time in its newly-formed second division and they were crowned champions of that division in 1982. Immediately afterwards though the Cheshire County League merged with the Lancashire Combination to create the North West Counties League with Congleton Town FC being one of its founder members. The club finished runners-up in 1986, only losing the title on goal difference. In 1980 better times had obviously prevailed as significant ground improvements had been undertaken with the pitch's infamous slope now levelled and the club's first set of floodlights installed. In 1983 the team had again contested the Cheshire Senior Cup final narrowly losing 1-2 to the much higher-ranked Macclesfield Town, and in 1987 the club were elevated to the Northern Premier League's newly-formed second tier. The 1989-90 season witnessed the club's finest achievement when the team battled through all of the qualifying rounds to reach the First-Round proper of

the FA Cup. They were drawn away to Football League side Crewe Alexandra and 1,000 supporters made the short journey to cheer them on. They acquitted themselves well but eventually lost 0-2 after holding out for 60 minutes. They were also League Cup finalists that season. The NPL years were very much a repeat of the post-war Cheshire County League period with the team struggling most seasons until a bottom finish in 2001, the club's centenary year, saw them relegated to the NWCFL. The team did reach the 4th round of the FA Trophy that season though, the team's best progression in that competition to date.

There were again turbulent times off the field with the club once more being close to extinction. In 1993 a new cantilever stand had been erected in place of the old wooden one, or rather what was left of it, and this undertaking nearly broke the club as they fell £10K short of the required £41K. Fortunately, the Congleton Town Council came to the club's rescue. There was also talk in 1996 of the club relocating to Back Lane Playing Fields following a proposal by Congleton Borough Council but, despite high hopes on both sides, nothing came of it in the end. Since season 2001-02 the club has been back in the NWCFL and it remains there to this day despite the FA inexplicably placing the club in the Midland League in 2021 as part of its reorganisation of the Pyramid. Thankfully, the club's appeal against that decision was successful. Unfortunately, there has been little success during this second stint in the NWCFL with the team's highest placing to date being third position in 2019. The team did win the Mid-Cheshire Senior Cup in 2007 for a first time and had been runners-up in 1997, 2002, 2008, 2009, 2011 and 2014 but they now no longer enter this competition. There were also notable runs in the FA Vase when they reached the 5th round in 2004 and 2021, the team's best progressions to date. Conversely off the field there have been massive strides. The club has been community-owned since 2014 thanks to the club shareholders from that time generously gifting all their Congleton Town Ltd shares to the community benefit society that is Congleton Town Community FC Ltd at a financial loss to themselves, there have been continuous and significant facilities improvements since

2006 including replacement floodlights in 2019 and then, most significantly of all, the club kicked off an exciting new era in June 2020 following its merger with Congleton Vale (now CTFC Reserves) and Congleton Rovers Juniors (now CTFC Juniors). The future looks bright for the Bears in their new club colours of yellow, black and white in spite of these Covid 19 times, which resulted in NWCFL seasons 2019-20 and 2020-21 being declared null and void. The Bears narrowly escaped being laterally moved for season 2021-22 to the Midland Football League as a result of the restructuring of the non-league pyramid. Only a well-constructed appeal to the FA, which was upheld, meant the Bears were reassigned back to the NWC. Whilst all that was taking place, new manager Richard Duffy with support from Director of Football Chris Rowley set about putting together a side that would be tasked with pressing for the much sought after promotion to step 4. Among notable signings were ex-Port Vale's Tom Pope.

Season 2022/23 proved the most successful season for many years. Great progress in the FA Cup, beating 3 Northern Premier League sides to reach the third qualifying round before exiting to National League North AFC Fylde after a replay. Reaching the Isuzu FA Vase semi final where the then current holders Newport Pagnell defeated the Bears on penalties. Winning the Macron Cup (NWC League Challenge Cup) and winning the Cheshire Senior Cup defeating full time National League side Altrincham. Added to that, although their league performance was just above ordinary, no side completed the double over the Bears. Building on that success and following lateral transfer to the Midland Football League (MFL), the Bears had little success in FA competitions in 2023/24 but ran out League Champions with promotion to Step 4

(Northern Premier League First Division West with a 34-match campaign that saw them win 25, draw 6 and lose just 3 with all defeats by Nov 23. 101 goals scored and 31 conceded plus winners of the MFL Cup saw Richard Duffy deservedly pick up the Manager of the Year award. The Bears now prepare for a new, and welcome, challenge. Progress over the opening half of the 2024/25 season has been sound with the Bears consolidating as Christmas approached. They will miss Anthony Griffith's contributions as he has been accepted on the FA's accelerated referee's programme for ex-players and his progress so far means he will need to be refereeing frequently. This has meant he has had to step away from his role as assistant manager at the club. He leaves with the best wishes from both officials and supporters. Louis Dodd and Oliver Simpson joined to assist Richard Duffy's management. An exceptional run of 15 unbeaten league games including 11 wins and 4 draws, saw the Bears climb into the top five and they ended a creditable 3rd and into the play offs. A home win on penalties, against Chasetown in the semi final meant a final against Hednesford Town away. The 2-0 defeat played in front of 4701 spectators was a record play off attendance for the NPL. It marked the end of the best 3 years in the Bears history and the challenge to maintain the standards set by the team management and players for 2025/26. During the close season, the Bears added the very experienced Peter Ward to their management team.

What followed was a reversal of fortune as the Bears struggled to recapture the form of previous seasons and ended up avoiding relegation to the NWC on the last day of the season with a 4-1 home win against Trafford, while Sporting Khalsa lost 2-1 away at Witton Albion. Much of the problem arose from losing leading scorer Max McCarthy for 2 lengthy periods plus other injuries throughout the season. 2026/27 looks set to be a better season after concerted recruitment during the summer.

PLAYER PROFILES

CONGLETON TOWN PLAYER PROFILES

David Parton - Dave has been a central figure in some of the most memorable moments of Congleton's recent history. The former Stoke City goalkeeper has also represented Nantwich Town, Kidsgrove Athletic and Whitchurch Alport. He joined the Bears in 2020 and has since passed 200 appearances, combining reliable handling and shot-stopping with a particular reputation for saving penalties. Parton played in the sides that reached the FA Vase semi-final, won the Cheshire Senior Cup and Macron Cup double in 2023, and secured the Midland League title in 2024. He brings continuity, experience and a calm presence to Richard Duffy's squad.

Jack Bates - Jack joined Congleton in August 2025 after leaving Wigan Athletic, where he developed through the Latics' academy system. A young, energetic defender, he quickly established himself during his first season at the Cleric Stadium and demonstrated the versatility contributing defensively in the full back and center half roles. His academy background gave him a strong technical and tactical grounding, while a full campaign in senior non-league football added valuable experience of the demands of the Northern Premier League. Returning for a second season with the Bears, Bates offers mobility, composure and further potential to develop within Richard Duffy's rebuilt squad.

Darren Chadwick - A highly experienced and dependable member of the Bears squad, Darren has represented Congleton since 2021. Comfortable at the heart of the defence and a regular threat from set pieces, 'Chadders' also has the composure to take responsibility from the penalty spot. He made 30 appearances and scored three goals during 2025/26, following several seasons as an important part of

Richard Duffy's side. His Congleton career includes the 2023 Cheshire Senior Cup and Macron Cup double, the 2024 Midland League championship and the 2025 NPL West play-off campaign. Darren's leadership, defensive strength and eye for an important goal remain valuable assets.

Richard Duffy - Richard's playing appearances have become rarer over time as he focuses more on his work on the touchline and leading the football management of the club. He occasionally utilises his experience to step into the defence when required. The former Wales international enjoyed a long Football League career with Swansea City, Portsmouth, Coventry City, Millwall, Exeter City and Port Vale before moving into non-league football. Since taking charge at Congleton, he has overseen an FA Vase semi-final, the Cheshire Senior Cup and Macron Cup double, the 2023/24 Midland League title and a run to the NPL West play-off final. His standards, tactical knowledge and understanding of the game continue to shape the squad.

Marco Fregapane - A familiar and popular face returns to the Cleric Stadium. Marco rejoined Congleton during the summer of 2026 after spending the previous season with Welsh Premier side Connah's Quay Nomads, where he gained experience in a full-time, top-flight environment. Still a young defender, he had already made more than 100 first-team appearances for the Bears before leaving in 2025 and became a firm supporters' favourite through his energy, commitment and attacking runs from right-back. Nicknamed the 'Sicilian Bulldog', Marco now returns with broader experience and an even stronger

understanding of what it means to represent his hometown club.

Matthew Liptrott - Matthew returns for a second season at Congleton after joining the Bears in 2025. A product of Blackpool's academy, he gained early senior experience on loan with Stalybridge Celtic and Radcliffe before continuing his development in non-league football. Able to play at full-back or in midfield, he brings pace, athleticism and useful flexibility to the squad. His first year at the Cleric Stadium allowed him to establish himself at Northern Premier League level and build an effective partnership on the right side of the Bears defence. At 23, Liptrott combines a strong academy education with significant room for further progression.

Owen Morris - Owen joined Congleton in the summer of 2024 after moving from South Wales to pursue his football ambitions in England. A composed and mobile defender, he played his part in the Bears' run to the 2025 NPL West play-off final before making 15 appearances and scoring once during an injury-disrupted 2025/26 campaign. Comfortable carrying the ball and contributing to the build-up from the back, Owen offers Richard Duffy a different defensive profile as well as the flexibility to operate in more than one role. He enters his third season at the Cleric Stadium looking to further establish himself and continue his development.

Julius Ndene - Julius is a new addition for 2026/27 after joining the Bears from Leek Town. Born in Stockport, the 23-year-old defender arrives with Northern Premier League experience and has already impressed during pre-season with his calmness in possession and composed approach to defending. Athletic and comfortable on the ball, he adds youth, mobility and competition to Richard Duffy's defensive options. His performances in the summer fixtures earned positive reviews from the club supporters and provided an early indication of how he can contribute at the Cleric Stadium. The coming campaign will be Julius's first season in Congleton colours.

Shakeel Jones-Griffiths - Shakeel returns to Congleton for a second spell after playing in the Northern Premier League Premier Division with Hyde United. He came through Bolton Wanderers' youth system and has also represented Glossop North End and Bury, as well as passing 100 appearances during his time with Hyde. A powerful and technically capable central midfielder, he brings energy, ball-winning ability and experience from a higher level. Supporters will remember his contribution during his earlier spell with the Bears, including a goal in the club's 2022/23 FA Vase run. Now 26, 'Shak' returns as a more experienced and rounded player.

Theo Knight - Theo arrives at the Cleric Stadium following an impressive 2025/26 season with Whitchurch Alport. The 21-year-old attacking midfielder can operate centrally or from a wide position and has earned a reputation for direct running, creativity and the ability to produce spectacular goals. His performances in Shropshire attracted attention and made him one of Richard Duffy's notable summer additions. Still at an early stage of his senior career, Theo offers pace and unpredictability in the final third and will be looking to translate his strong form at Step 5 into the Northern Premier League with the Bears.

Daniel Needham - One of the defining players of Congleton's recent era, Dan passed 200 appearances for the Bears during 2025/26. A dynamic attacking midfielder who can play in several forward roles, 'BGDN' has repeatedly delivered on major occasions. His goals were central to the FA Vase semi-final run, the 2023 cup double and the 2023/24 Midland League title-winning season, when he finished as the club's leading league scorer with 21 goals. Needham combines relentless energy with intelligent movement and a genuine goal threat. His experience and understanding of Richard Duffy's methods make him a particularly important link between the established squad and this summer's new arrivals.

Dallas Omoruyi - Dallas earned his move to Congleton after impressing throughout the 2026 pre-

season programme. The winger spent part of his development with Stockport County before gaining senior experience in non-league football. Quick, direct and eager to attack defenders, he gives the Bears another option in the wide areas and has already shown his ability to get into scoring positions, finding the net during the summer victory over Abbey Hulton United. This will be Dallas's first competitive season at the Cleric Stadium, and his pace and willingness to run at opponents should add a fresh dimension to Richard Duffy's attacking options.

João Soares - Portuguese midfielder João joined the Bears after catching the eye during the 2026 pre-season schedule. The 23-year-old was most recently with Daisy Hill and arrives with the opportunity to establish himself at Northern Premier League level. Comfortable receiving the ball and linking play through midfield, he adds a different technical profile to Richard Duffy's squad. His pre-season performances showed enough quality and composure to earn a place in the group ahead of the new campaign. This will be João's first season at Congleton, and he will be looking to build quickly on the promising impression he made during the summer.

Peter Williams - Pete returns to the Bears for another spell after a very brief fling over the summer at another local club. Previously reaching the landmark of 200 Congleton appearances, Pete is a composed and versatile midfielder that has been an important part of the club's most successful recent period, contributing to the FA Vase semi-final run, the Cheshire Senior Cup and Macron Cup triumphs and the 2023/24 Midland League championship. His quality from set pieces and the penalty spot has produced several significant moments, including successful shoot-out kicks in both 2023 cup finals. 'Willo' brings experience, calmness in possession and a deep understanding of Richard Duffy's standards and the culture of the club.

Kieran Garner-Knapper - Kieran enters his third season with the Bears after joining during the summer of 2024. The energetic forward has worked his way up through the non-league pyramid and brought that

same hunger to the Cleric Stadium. Capable of playing across the front line, he presses defenders, runs the channels and provides a direct attacking outlet. Kieran made 40 appearances and scored five goals during 2025/26, underlining his importance to the squad during a demanding campaign. His pace, work rate and ability to stretch opponents continue to make him a valuable part of Richard Duffy's attacking plans.

Matthew Gillam - Matty begins his third season at Congleton after joining the club in 2024. A product of Rochdale's academy, he made 20 Football League appearances for the Dale and gained experience with Stalybridge Celtic and Cork City before spells at Guiseley, Atherton Collieries and Glossop North End. Strong, mobile, willing to work across the front line with exception technical ability, he can lead the attack or operate in support of another striker. His professional background and experience across several levels give Richard Duffy a proven and adaptable forward option as the Bears prepare for the new campaign.

Dylan Scott - Dylan joins the Bears with Football League experience and an impressive development pedigree. The Stone-born striker progressed through Burton Albion's academy, made his League One debut in 2024 and scored his first senior goal in the EFL Trophy. Productive loan spells with Hanley Town were followed by experience at Mickleover, Leek Town, Stalybridge Celtic and Stafford Rangers. An energetic, hard-working forward who presses from the front and attacks space, Dylan has already opened his Congleton account during pre-season. At 20, he combines senior experience with considerable potential and adds pace and intensity to the Bears' forward line.

Robert Stevenson - Rob arrives at Congleton as one of the most proven forwards in the division. A former Stoke City youth player, the Stoke-on-Trent-born striker became a leading figure at Leek Town, scoring more than 100 goals across eight seasons before moving to Hednesford Town in 2024. His progress there was interrupted by a serious head injury, making his return to regular football particularly

welcome. Strong, intelligent and experienced in leading a Step 4 attack, Stevenson offers goals, hold-up play and a focal point for the players around him. He joins the Bears ready to begin a new chapter at the Cleric Stadium.

Joseph Woolley - Joe is a new arrival for 2026/27 and brings considerable experience of football across the Northwest and Staffordshire non-league scene. The 30-year-old forward has previously represented Kidsgrove Athletic, Leek Town and Bootle, giving him a strong knowledge of both the division and many of the opponents the Bears will face. Mobile and capable of

operating across the attacking line, he adds further competition and flexibility to Richard Duffy's forward options. Joe arrives at the Cleric Stadium at a good stage of his career, combining physical maturity with extensive Step 4 experience and an understanding of the demands of the Northern Premier League.

James Kirby - Striker originally came through the Hyde United Academy in 2013. Has since had spells with Leek Town, Colwyn Bay and Atherton Collieries. He spent 3years playing abroad in Sweden and Malta before returning to Hyde United and playing for their manager Michael Clegg who was with him at Atherton. It is pleasing to see a local Congleton player here at his own club and once settled, as should provide the extra strength up front the Bears have been seeking.

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By Jon Couch

TADLEY Calleva and SE Dons are assured to fly the flag for Step 5 clubs in next weekend's FA Cup fourth qualifying round after another round of upsets.

Combined Counties League Premier South side Tadley came from behind to beat Step 3 Dartford 2-1, while SE Dons, a Sunday side just two years ago and playing in the FA Cup for the very first time, thrashed higher-ranked Weymouth 5-1 away.

Basingstoke-based Calleva have gone well beyond their previous best of the second qualifying round with Joe Lawler's men facing a historic trip to National League side Aldershot Town in a crunch Hampshire derby at the EBB Stadium.

SE Dons, meanwhile, are undoubtedly the story of the FA Cup so far this season..

Founded by rapper Don Strapzy and friends, the club based in Bexleyheath were playing in the Orpington and Bromley District League as recently as 2022 and made their senior football bow when merging with Forest Hill Park two years later.

There, under chairman Andy Ansah and manager Antonio Gonnella, they joined the Southern Counties East League Division One and won promotion to the Premier in their first full season.

This year's FA Cup marks a return to the limelight for former Brentford and Southend United striker Ansah, who became a household name in hit Sky One drama Dream Team in the late 1990s and later worked

alongside former England captain Wayne Rooney in Wayne Rooney's Street Striker.

Next up for the Dons is a tricky trip to Southern League Premier South side Sholing, for whom Matt Le Tissier is an associate director.

The Boatmen, too, have equalled their best-ever FA Cup run and looking to reach the first round proper for the first side.

In all, there are also seven other clubs who have equalled their previous best by reaching the fourth qualifying round; AFC Rushden & Diamonds, Anstey Nomads, Bury, Chertsey Town, Cray Wanderers, Dorking Wanderers and Plymouth Parkway.

AFC Rushden and Plymouth Parkway both picked up victories over higher-ranked opposition, beating Braintree Town and Horsham respectively, while Salisbury FC too are celebrating a best-ever run after a handsome 5-0 win over Dulwich Hamlet – just 48 hours after returning from an impromptu visit to the Middle East, where they took on Kuwaiti Premier League big guns Al-Qadsia at the 22,000-seater Mohammad Al-Hamad Stadium.

At least one more side will make club history next weekend, should they come through their respective replays (played after this piece was written).

Another Step 5 side, Trafford, from the North West Counties League, travel to NPL West side Atherton Collieries on Tuesday night replay after a 2-2 draw in the initial tie.

Whichever side wins will be guaranteed to make club history when they make the tough trip to National League side AFC Fylde next weekend.

At the same time, Isthmian Premier side Wingate & Finchley can set a new record if they beat Bedford Town in their replay; their previous best was the third qualifying round.

One thing's for sure, our editors are going to have their work cut out selecting a star game for next week's NLP with so many crunch ties to choose from.

Bury FC versus Harrogate Town had a particular ring to it, similarly Leatherhead v Yeovil Town, Chesham United v Forest Green Rovers or perhaps an eagerly-awaited Manchester derby between Altrincham and FC United.

Whatever happens, there's sure to be the usual array of thrills, spills and upsets that the world's most famous cup competition never fails to throw up.

The full fourth qualifying round draw is as follows...

Northern section: Harborough Town v Spennymoor Town, Chorley v Worcester City, Gateshead v Stafford Rangers or Halesowen Town, FC Halifax Town v South Shields, Leiston v Guiseley, Barrow v Gloucester City, Hartlepool United v Marine, Boston United v Scunthorpe United, Macclesfield or Scarborough Athletic v Anstey Nomads, Altrincham v FC United of Manchester, Bury v Harrogate Town, Bury Town or Spalding United v Alvechurch, AFC Rushden & Diamonds v Morecambe, Kidderminster Harriers v Solihull Moors, Carlisle United v Tamworth, AFC Fylde v Trafford or Atherton Collieries.

Southern section: Salisbury v Eastbourne Borough, Sutton United v Truro City, Chesham United v Forest Green Rovers, Leatherhead v Yeovil Town, Eastleigh v Brentwood Town, Southend United v Berkhamsted, Sholing v SE Dons, Plymouth Parkway v Chertsey Town, Dover Athletic v Dorking Wanderers, Bedford Town or Wingate & Finchley v Cray Wanderers, Uxbridge v Hornchurch, Aldershot Town v Tadley Calleva, Torquay United v Oxford City, Wimborne Town v Chelmsford City, Boreham Wood v Woking, Wealdstone v Worthing

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RESPECT THE STANDARD

SETTING STANDARDS AT 1874 NORTHWICH

1874 Northwich has supported The FA's Respect programme for a number of years. The programme has had a refresh in 2024, rebranded as "Respect the Standard". The FA have set out five standards of behaviour which aim to ensure that all football can be enjoyed in a safe, positive environment, whether youth, open age or walking. These standards are:

1874 Northwich has supported The FA's Respect programme for a number of years. The programme has had a refresh in 2024, rebranded as "Respect the Standard". The FA have set out five standards of behaviour which aim to ensure that all football can be enjoyed in a safe, positive environment, whether youth, open age or walking. These standards are:

- Enjoy the Game - we're here to enjoy ourselves. win, lose or draw.
- Give Respect - we always treat others as we'd like to be treated.
- Be Inclusive - we embrace differences, football is for everyone
- Work Together - we're a team, on and off the pitch
- Play Safe - we all have a role in safeguarding children

Three grassroots codes have been published, aimed at youth players, adult football (players, coaches, officials) and at adults involved in junior football (including coaches, spectators and parents). These Respect the Standard codes have been adopted by the Midland League.

As supporters of 1874, you too can influence the atmosphere at matches. We have tried to define acceptable behaviour in our Code for Spectators. A copy of this code can be found using this link.

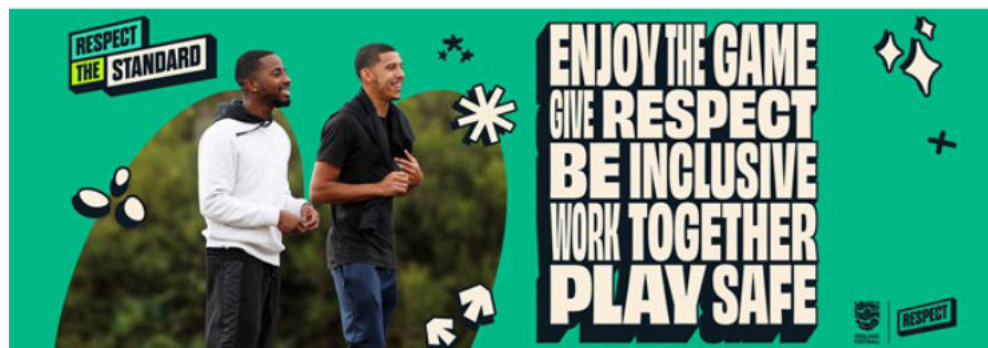
We would hope that you respect ALL players, officials and fans (whether ours or the opposition). We are proud to be a family club and we all have a part to play in ensuring that everyone attending our matches feels welcome and safe, not just the youngsters.

Thanks

Maggie Coats

Club Welfare Officer

cwo@1874northwich.com





ANDYSMANCLUB



#ITSOKAYTOTALK

WHAT IS ANDYSMANCLUB?

ANDYSMANCLUB is a free peer-to-peer group that provides a place for men to come together in a safe and open environment to talk about the issues or problems that they have faced or are currently facing.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

The process is about bringing men together who have been in similar situations, to help each other on a peer to peer basis, sharing how they have dealt with various situations through lived experiences. No matter how big or small your problem feels, we are here to support each other. The 5 questions that are asked each week are designed not only to encourage men to talk, but to start to focus on the positives and on strategies to keep moving forward. There is no pressure to answer any of the questions and it is not uncommon for men to just listen for the first few sessions. The clubs all run on the same format and adhere to the same guidelines. A key principle of ANDYSMANCLUB is anything that is said in the club, stays within the club.

WHO IS IT FOR?

The club is open to any man 18 or over, who is going through a storm, been through a storm or just wants to meet a good group of people with the aim of improving one another.

WHEN IS IT?

ANDYSMANCLUB meet every Monday at 7pm (excluding Bank Holiday Mondays).

WHERE IS IT?

ANDYSMANCLUB has clubs in many locations across the UK. Check our website below for a full list.

HOW DO I JOIN?

Just turn up on the night. No registration or referral is required, all we ask is that you arrive before 7pm. The full list of our locations is available on our website.

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OUR HISTORY

A HISTORY OF 1874 NORTHWICH

Unless a major event in your life occurred on this day – for instance, the birth of a baby, the passing of a family member or very close friend, maybe even you moving house or starting a new job, then I very much suspect you will have little or no recollection of what you were doing on the evening of 15 November 2012.

But for a number of former and current residents of the small Cheshire market town of Northwich - all of whom had been long-standing, ardent and loyal supporters of the town's oldest, most famous and successful football club - Northwich Victoria - that day was a truly significant. For on that dark, cold, and wet autumn night, disaffected members of the Vics Supporters Trust voted 141 to 4 to collectively turn their backs on the Vics and create an entirely new club!

But exactly what had happened to bring people together to even discuss this radical proposal? After all, the vast majority of football fans would never even countenance the thought of ditching their club. Much like your dog, your football club is supposed to be for life: isn't it?

Well, if you wish to fully acquaint yourself with the events that led up to the historic vote you can do no better than turn to Mark Bevan's book 'Twenty Years of Madness' that was published in 2013. This excellent tome sets out the history of the Vics from 1992 – which is where Ken Edwards's earlier history of the Vics 'A Team For All Seasons' ended - to mid-2013, six months or so after the date that '74 was formed.

In short, by late 2011 such were the state of affairs within the club that many Vics fans were utterly sick and tired of the manner in which their club had been 'managed' over the previous decade or more by

successive regimes. In short, they had been belittled, demeaned and lied to by those who had chosen to take on the task of running the oldest football club in Cheshire, but frankly had collectively made a complete and utter pig's ear of things.

The straw that finally broke the camel's back had occurred on Thursday January 19th January 2012 when the club were evicted from club's home of just 7 years, The Victoria Stadium. It transpired that it had been purchased by a neighbouring company and, quite understandably, they now wished to push ahead with the plans they had for the site which oddly didn't include having a football stadium on their newly acquired land!

So, the fans decided to take things into their own hands and create a truly democratic, open, inclusive fan's run club in which they had a direct say in. The name they chose for the new club – 1874 Northwich - was a nod to the distinguished history of the club that they had supported, followed and loved. Whilst this might not have been the member's intention, by doing so the fledgling club actually became the only one in Europe whose name starts with wholly numeric characters!

Following the vote a massive amount of hard work was put in by the fans to ensure that the club could commence playing at the start of the 2013/14 season. This included

- Applying to join the North West Counties Football League
- Appointing our first 'Gaffer,' Ian Street

- Signing our first ground sharing agreement with Winsford United

The level of support shown for the new club wasn't a flash in the pan either as during our first season 1874's average home league attendance was 320 – which put the club in the top 100 best supported clubs in non-league football.

That first season ended with the club being promoted to the Premier Division and the second proved to be equally successful with the club finishing in third place.

The 2015/16 season proved to be a steady campaign in the league with an eventual finishing spot of 4th, but it ended in a truly memorable manner when Ian Street's side outclassed local rivals and Step 3 outfit Witton Albion by a 3-0 score-line on their own turf to lift the Mid Cheshire District Cup for the first time.

This trophy was retained the following campaign with a 1-0 win over rivals Northwich Vics, but by this time the management of the club had passed into the hands of Paul Bowyer and Wayne Goodison – both of whom had been part of Ian Street's back-room team.

The impact of the new management team was truly remarkable, as the 2017/18 season proved to be by far the most exciting and memorable in the short history of 1874, during which the 'Go-Bo' Green Army.

- Defeated National League North and former FA Trophy winners North Ferriby in the FA Cup
- Finally exited the competition on penalties in a 3rd Qualifying Round replay
- Reached the semi-finals of the FA Vase, only for eventual winners Thatcham Town to deny '74 a trip to Wembley by triumphing 4-2 on aggregate.
- Took hundreds of fans to away ties at Leighton and Thatcham

- Recorded a record home attendance of 1674 in the second leg of the semi-final against the Wiltshire outfit
- Ended the season by playing a mammoth 26 games in just 57 days and 69 games overall

Given the successes of the 17/18 campaign, it would have been astonishing if '74 had been able to equal the achievements of the previous season. After all, even the top clubs in the country struggle to repeat their immediate past triumphs – so why should this not be true for '74?

So, a final position of 10th – the lowest that the club had finished in since being promoted to the Premier Division– did seem to suggest a decline in the clubs' fortunes. But that would be completely wrong, as 1874's final standing was hugely influenced by a difficult start to the season in which the loss of key players from the 17/18 campaign - allied to a cruel run of injuries to many of the clubs' key creative and attacking players - resulted in a somewhat disjointed first few months of the season and early exits in both the FA Cup and Vase.

Another factor that we probably didn't fully appreciate at the time was the impact that the untimely death in December 2017 of our inspirational and dearly loved Chairman Paul Stockton had on the club. It was therefore perhaps a fitting tribute to this wonderful man when, on the afternoon of Saturday 4 May 2019, his name was chanted aloud by the 500 or so '74 fans who had just witnessed their side lift its first major piece of silverware, an 88th minute goal by the Greens gave a deserved 1-0 victory over league champions City of Liverpool FC in the final of the NWCFL League Cup.

Having agreed what was initially a 2 year groundshare deal with Barnton, during the summer of 2019 the club moved loc-stock and barrel from Winsford to their new home at Townfield and thereby kicked off the 2019/20 season playing within the boundary of the town that bears the club's name. Both clubs are now



The
Daniel Wilkinson
Foundation

*Providing Screening and Defibrillators to
prevent Sudden Cardiac Death in the young*

The Daniel Wilkinson Foundation is a charity set up in memory of Daniel Wilkinson who died in 2016 aged 24, while playing the game he loved, from an underlying heart condition called Arrhythmogenic Right Ventricular Cardiomyopathy (ARVC).



Dan played football from an early age and joined Hull City AFC when he was 10, earning a professional contract aged 18. Loughborough University followed where he completed a degree in Accounting and Financial Management while playing non-league football. He was an athlete who enjoyed the gym and took his health and nutrition very seriously. He lived life to the full and had so much ahead of him.

Other than feeling light-headed on a few occasions in the month before he died, he had no symptoms!

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- Warning signs may include light-headedness, fainting, palpitations, swollen legs, breathlessness.
- Every week in the UK, 12 apparently fit and healthy young people (aged 35 and under) die from previously undiagnosed heart conditions.
- In Italy, where screening is mandatory for all young people engaged in organised sport, they have reduced the incidence of young sudden cardiac death by 89%.

OUR MISSION

The Daniel Wilkinson Foundation has been set up to raise awareness of SCD and to provide funding towards heart screening, defibrillators and CPR/defibrillator training primarily for grass-roots sporting teams.

Tragedies can be prevented through cardiac screening. It is vital that young people are identified and treated.

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working to develop a longer-term vision for the ground that will improve facilities for fans, players and officials alike.

The NWCFL Macron Cup win proved to be a springboard for the club as from the very outset of the it was clear that '74 would be one of the main contenders for the NWCFL title.

Another good FA Cup run – which was halted at the 2nd Qualifying Round by an admittedly fortunate Whitby Town side – was the precursor to an astonishing league campaign that included a 15-game unbeaten league run – another club record.

But it wasn't just the results that were impressive, it was the swash-buckling, stylish passing and pressing style of play in which '74 played the game that brought them so many plaudits and admiration from other clubs and commentators from all quarters. But in addition to their verve and panache, the side also possessed a steely, never-say-die, attitude that that gained them several precious points from seemingly difficult positions. This left '74 in the box seat at the head of the league with 9 games left and 8 points ahead of second placed Rylands with a game in hand.

So, if there was ever a bunch of players and back-room staff that deserved to end a season celebrating a league title, then it ought to have been those fantastic bunch of players. But as you will know, the Covid 19 outbreak resulted in a sudden cessation to grassroots football and, heartbreakingly, players, officials and fans alike were denied seeing the league trophy being paraded around Townfield.

Although we didn't know it at the time, '74's elevation to Step 4 was only to be delayed by 12 months as due to the re-organisation of the National League Pyramid, 74 became eligible for promotion to the newly created Northern Premier League West! And to celebrate this elevation, on 24 July 2021 the Greens became the first club in the 40+ year history of the competition to retain the NWCFL Macron League Cup by

convincingly defeating Runcorn Town 6-3 in the much delayed 2019/20 final.

Life during our first campaign as a Step 4 club was inevitably challenging at times. As a small fish in a much bigger pool, almost each week we faced by clubs with far greater resources than we have at our disposal. So, a final finishing spot of 12th out of 20 was a highly satisfying end result. It might have been even more impressive had our home form had been a little more consistent!

At one stage in our second season, it seemed as if we'd comfortably better this showing, but a lacklustre end to the season eventually saw '74 slip to 14th place. The undoubted highlight was the deserved 1-0 away win at eventual champions Macclesfield, a game that was witnessed by over 3500 fans – which remains the biggest crowd to have witnessed a game involving '74.

Unfortunately, our third season at Step 4 proved to be a difficult and at many times dispiriting watch with just 4 league wins being recorded – which was double the number of managerial changes!

Towards the end of the season the club appointed former Runcorn Town, Conwy Borough, Cefn Druids and Flint Town United manager Chris Herbert and he was given the task of almost building a side from scratch which would be capable of competing the Premier Division of the Midland Football League.

And Chris – who was ably assisted in this task by non-league 'legend' Steve Burr – almost got '74 back into Step 4 at the first time of asking as they made it through to the play-off final against Shifnal Town. However, the Shropshire side proved to be the better side on the day and so '74 were consigned to play at Step 5 for another year.

Fast forward exactly 12 months and '74 again found themselves facing the same task – needing to beat the Premier League runners up in the play-off final at their 'home' ground to secure a spot back in Step 4.

But unlike the tussle with Shifnal a year earlier, this game had some real extra spice as '74's opponents were none other than a certain Northwich Victoria!

Well over 1200 fans poured through the turnstiles of Vics' home ground in Runcorn to watch the showdown between the two Northwich clubs.

Unsurprisingly given both intense rivalry between the two and the prizes on offer – a place at Step 4 and local bragging rights - the match was a tight, cagey affair with few goalmouth chances. In fact, it was settled by the only true piece of quality play during the game when '74's Mike Hayes turned the ball into the net from an acute angle having been fed by a delicious through ball from Craig Pritchard.

When the final whistle sounded the players in Green fell to their knees in despair – an emotion that was no doubt shared by the Vics fans present that afternoon. In contrast, those clad in violet started a celebration with the hordes of ecstatic '74 fans that went on well into the night!

But things in life – and particularly football – are never simple and just weeks after this triumph its architect Chris Herbert announced that he had agreed to join Vauxhall Motors as their new manager and he was quickly followed by the majority of the squad that had secured '74 their spot back at Step 4.

Faced by this huge and unexpected exodus, '74's Board acted quickly to secure the services of Rory Fallon who led Wythenshawe to promotion from the NWCFL in 2025. Having managed to retain several key and experienced members of the promotion winning squad Rory has already started to add to this number by making several astute signings.

So, whilst it's certainly been a summer of unexpected upheaval at Townfield, everyone associated with '74 is anticipating that Rory will be able to assemble a squad of sufficient quality that will ensure our 4th season at this level will be significantly more successful than the last one!

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PLAYER PROFILES

1874 NORTHWICH PLAYER PROFILES

Ellis Allen – Goalkeeper who rejoined the club in the summer of 2026 from Flixton. Previous clubs include Oldham Athletic, APEA Akrotiri, Hollywell Town, Whitchurch Alport, Droylsden, Glossop North End, Abbey Hey, Alsager Town and Witton Albion.

Max Beddow – Goalkeeper who joined the club in the summer of 2026 on loan from Altrincham. Previously loaned to our landlords Barnton.

Joe Blake – Right-back who joined the club in the summer of 2026 from Preston North End.

Noel Brindle – Central midfielder who joined the club in September 2026 on loan from Chorley. Previous clubs include Wythenshawe.

Elliott Coleman – Left-back, central defender or forward who joined the club in the summer of 2026 from Winsford United. Previous clubs include Alsager Town.

Ben Crane – Forward who joined the club in the summer of 2026 from Northwich Victoria. Previous clubs include Witton Albion.

Courtney Duffus – Forward who joined the club in October 2026 from Kidsgrove Athletic. Previous clubs include Cheltenham Town, Everton, Bury, Oldham Athletic, Waterford, Yeovil Town, Bromley, Morecambe, Stockport County, Barrow, Hartlepool United, Macclesfield and Bootle.

Niall Fallon – Central defender who joined the club in the summer of 2026 and is the younger brother of manager, Rory Fallon. Previous clubs include Squires

Gate, Northwich Victoria, Maine Road and Wythenshawe Town.

Lewis Farmer – Attacking midfielder who joined the club in the summer of 2026 from Barnoldswick Town. Previous clubs include Sheffield Wednesday, Workington, Northwich Victoria and Hednesford Town.

Alfie Friars – Central defender who joined the club in October 2026 on loan from derby County. Previous clubs include Derry City, Coleraine and Leek Town.

Mike Ibeto – Central defender who rejoined the club in the summer of 2026 from FC St Helens. Previous clubs include Abbey Hey, Wythenshawe and Chadderton.

Ola Ibrahim – Central midfielder who joined the club in September 2026. Previous clubs include Manchester United, Derby County, Hednesford Town, NK Kety Emmi & Impol Bistrica, FC Legnago Salus, Portoguardo Calcio and Bala Town.

Will Igoe – Forward who joined the club in the summer of 2026 from Northwich Victoria. Previous clubs include Witton Albion, Hanley Town, Wythenshawe and Barnton.

Mark Jones – Club captain who plays as a central defender or midfielder and joined the club in the summer of 2016 from Nantwich Town. Previous clubs include Liverpool, Witton Albion and Radcliffe.

Harry Lynn – Forward who joined the club in the summer of 2026 from Stockport Georgians. Previous

clubs include Radcliffe, Witton Albion, Ossett United and Chadderton.

John McGrath – Winger or attacking midfielder who joined the club in January 2025 from Burscough. Previous clubs include City of Liverpool, Widnes, Clitheroe and Prescot Cables.

Tom Mitchell – Central defender who joined the club in November 2025 from Lower Breck. Previous clubs include Atherton Collieries, Widnes, Skelmersdale United and Vauxhall Motors.

Brad Mundy – Central midfielder who joined the club in September 2026. Previous club include Manchester City, Blackburn Rovers, Fleetwood Town and Salford City.

Kenny Mwaliteta – Winger or attacking midfielder who joined the club in the summer of 2026 from West Didsbury and Chorlton. Previous clubs include Atletico Madrid, Witton Albion, Barnton and Helsby.

Simon Njaria – Central midfielder who joined the club in the summer of 2026. Previous clubs include Leeds United, Bradford Park Avenue, Halifax Town, Harrogate Town, Alfreton Town, Frickley Athletic, Rotherham United, Warrington Town, Altrincham, Shaw Lane, Glossop North End, Guiseley, Mossley, Buxton, Radcliffe, Telford United, Matlock Town, Basford United, Cheadle Town, Stafford Rangers and Clitheroe.

Niall Osborne – Right-back who joined the club in the summer of 2024 from Liverpool. Previous clubs include Newcastle Town.

Blake Robinson – Central midfielder who joined the club the summer of 2026 from Winsford United. Previous clubs include Colwyn Bay, Airbus UK Broughton, Whitchurch Alport and Eccleshall.

Jim Simms – Forward who joined the club in September 2026 on loan from Avro. Previous clubs include Oldham Athletic, Hull City, Buxton, Darlington, Ashton United, Wythenshawe Town, Southport and West Didsbury and Chorlton.

Kevin Spinelli – Forward who joined the club in the summer of 2026 from Chasetown. Previous clubs include Ashton United, Avro, Runcorn Linnets, Witton Albion and Trafford.

Josh Wood – forward who joined the club in September 2026 from Flixton. Previous clubs include Trafford.

Jack Woolley – Forward who rejoined the club in the summer of 2025 from Winsford United and is the younger brother of club legend, Matt Woolley. Previous clubs include Barnton, Stockport Georgians and Alsager Town.

Matt Woolley – Central midfielder, who is capable of playing almost anywhere on the pitch, joined the club in the winter of 2013 from Knutsford and is the club record appearance holder with over 450 appearances. Previous clubs include Witton Albion.

Evra Yao – Forward who joined the club in the summer of 2026 from Lower Breck. Previous clubs include Southport and Bootle.





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Courtney DUFFUS*				
Niall FALLON				
Lewis FARMER*				
Alfie FRIARS*				
Mike IBETO*				
Ola IBRAHIM*				
Will IGOE				
Mark JONES				
Harry LYNN				
Tom MITCHELL*				
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Simon NJARIA*				
Niall OSBORNE*				
Jim SIMMS*				
Kevin SPINELLI*				
Josh WOOD*				
Jack WOOLLEY				
Matt WOOLLEY				
Evra YAO*				

MANAGER

Richard DUFFY



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Joao SOARES				
Robert STEVENSON*				
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MATCH OFFICIALS

REF: Daniel SIMS

AST 1: Matthew TURNER-ALLEN

AST 2: Daniel NETTLETON

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