MARCH 2026 VOL.4

GUAFC NEWS

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF GREYSTONES UNITED AFC

Dear Members,

I hope you are all well. The poor weather since Christmas has meant a stop start return to playing matches for many teams. The benefit of having two all weather pitches meant that we were able to facilitate lots of games,11 a side and small sided but it has still been a very difficult few months for fixture schedules. Training continued but nothing beats playing matches.

Hopefully the poor weather is behind us and with the bright nights on the way back there is lots of football ahead. We look forward to seeing Woodlands buzzing again every weekend from now until the end of the season.

Greystones United continues to grow and it is fantastic to see so many players enjoying football across the club. Thank you to all members, volunteers, coaches and families who help make this such a positive environment for over 1,000 young players.

Eddie Butler
Chairman

CLUB OFFICE CONTACTS

Kiersten : administration@guafc.ie
Anne Marie: clubadmin@guafc.ie

CONNECT WITH US!

Like us on Facebook - @Greystonesutdfc
Follow us on Instagram - @Greystonesunitedofficial
linktr.ee/guafc
Follow us on TikTok : @officialguafc

CLUB OFFICE OPEN HOURS

MONDAY - SATURDAY 9AM - 1PM

BOARD UPDATE

Several new members have recently joined the Greystones United board.

Marian Waters has taken on the role of Communications Director and has already introduced a new structure for how the club communicates with members.

Dave Behan has joined as Registrar. He stepped into a complex role during the transition to Clubzap and has worked hard to manage registrations across both FAI and league systems.

Steven Gough has joined as Director of Boys Football. Steven had a long League of Ireland career with Bray Wanderers, Shamrock Rovers and Longford Town. He also founded and developed a grassroots club in the Middle East which later became a professional club. His experience and ideas will benefit players and teams across the club.

We wish Marian, Dave and Steven every success in their roles and thank them for giving their time and expertise to support the continued growth of the club.

EDDIE BUTLER - CHAIRMAN

CLUB NEWS

New Football Structure

As we move into the next phase of our Club development, I'm pleased to share an update on the new football structure and the progress being made across the club.

Over recent months we've focused on creating a more robust football organisation which will assist teams from our academy to the first team while ensuring our coaching departments are working with a shared philosophy. We've introduced 5 new Lead Coaches which can only strengthen our vision along with continuous Coach Education Programmes provided by ex-FAI coach Lar Mahony.

This structure is already helping us make better long-term decisions, support player development more effectively, and build squads with the balance and identity we want. There is still plenty of work ahead, but the foundations are now stronger, the communication across departments is clearer, and we're confident this approach will help us deliver sustained success on and off the pitch

Stephen Gough
Director of Football

GROUNDS UPDATE

The club is planning several important developments at Woodlands. The main priority is replacing the carpet on the 11 a side all weather pitch. The current surface is certified until March 2028 but is approaching the end of its life. Replacing it will cost just over €250,000 and the club hopes to complete the project in summer 2027.

Planning has already begun and a pitch development draw will launch soon to support fundraising for this major investment.

Other improvements are also underway:

- A roof will be added to the seated spectator area on the main pitch to improve the matchday experience.
- A new Strength and Conditioning area will open shortly to support player development across the club.

SCHOOLBOY/SCHOOLGIRLS UPDATE

Greystones United continues to be one of the largest schoolboy and schoolgirl clubs in the country, with 71 teams and over 1,100 members. The scale of the club reflects the strong demand for football in the community and the commitment of the volunteers who support our teams every week.

Coaches, managers and volunteers give many hours of their time to organise training, matches and player development. Their work ensures that players across all age groups have the opportunity to learn, compete and enjoy the game in a positive environment.

The club is proud to see players progress through the pathway from grassroots football to higher levels of the game. Over the past five years, 26 Greystones United girls and 8 boys have progressed to academy football with Bray Wanderers through the club's partnership pathway as part of the League of Ireland academy initiative.

The **Greystones United Academy** continues to grow and remains a key starting point for young players beginning their football journey.

Since the New Year, academy numbers have been increasing each week.

- **Academy 1** now averages around 30 players every Saturday.
- **Academy 2** averages around 45 players every Saturday.
- The **Girls Academy** continues to see consistent participation with 12 to 14 players attending each Sunday.

The academy coaches are central to the success of the programme. Their commitment and enthusiasm make it possible to run sessions every week and support the development of young players.

Plans are underway to host a mini blitz in March for **Academy 1** and **Academy 2** players. The club hopes to welcome teams from other clubs for a morning of games and football.

Academy players are also beginning to experience match play at the next level. Since the start of the year, six academy players have been invited to support Under 8 fixtures when teams were short on numbers. Two players from the Girls Academy have also gained valuable experience playing in Under 8 girls matches.

It is fantastic to see young players beginning their football journey and progressing through the club pathway.

Michelle
Director of Girls Football

Seán
Head of Football

WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF IRELAND

We wish our two Women's League of Ireland teams the very best of luck as their new season begins.

These teams operate through our partnership with Bray Wanderers, which provides an important pathway for players progressing to League of Ireland football.

Over the past five years, 26 Greystones United girls and 8 boys have progressed to academy football with Bray Wanderers as part of the League of Ireland Academy initiative. The numbers on the girls pathway are particularly strong and reflect the club's commitment to supporting female players at every stage of their development.

WOMENS U17 LOI

WOMENS LOI DEV TEAM

SENIOR MEN'S TEAMS

The club currently fields three senior teams in the Leinster Senior League and one Over 35 team in the Amateur Football League.

INTERMEDIATE TEAM

Our senior team competes in the Leinster Senior League Sunday 1A Intermediate Division. The team is managed by Darren Forsyth, with Niall Donnelly as assistant manager and Robert Plunkett and Colum Tinsley as assistant coaches.

Following a recent run of good form, the team is focused on securing its place in the division for next season. Home matches take place on Friday evenings and support from the club community is always welcome.

SUNDAY TEAM

Our second senior team plays in the Leinster Senior League Sunday 3A Division. Managed by Paul Smith and assisted by Alan McCarthy, the team is currently top of the table with four games remaining.

The squad is made up largely of young players who progressed from the club's Under 19 team over the past few years. Home matches take place in Archfield on Sunday afternoons.

UNDER 19 TEAM

The Under 19 team is managed by Mark Walsh and assisted by Val Cirella. They have completed their league campaign in a very competitive division and now turn their attention to the upcoming cup competition.

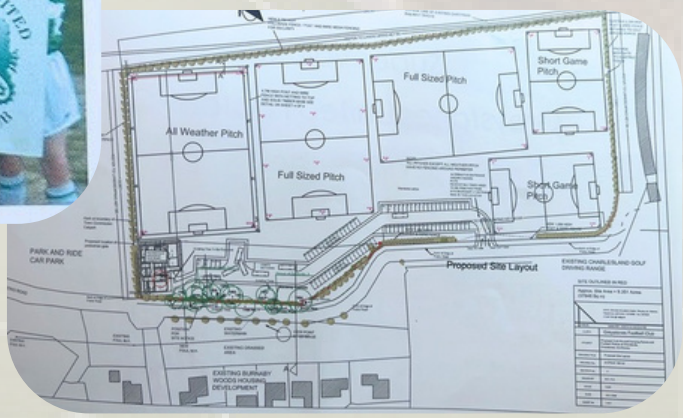
Home matches are usually played on Friday evenings. These young players represent the future of the club.

OVER 35 TEAM

The club's Over 35 team returned last season after a short break and finished runners up in Division 2 South, gaining promotion to Division 1 South.

The team is managed by Eoin Lynch, assisted by Derek White, with coaching support from Ian Shortt and Carl Doyle. The new season begins at the end of March, with home matches usually played on Saturday evenings around 5pm.

20 YEARS AT THE WOODLANDS



Next month marks 20 years since Greystones United played its last game at Darcy's Field and took its first steps at the Woodlands. It is a good moment to look back at how far the club has come.

Darcy's Field was located at what is now Marina Park, north of Marina village, had been home since 1984. For over two decades it was where the club grew, where teams trained, where matches were won and lost. By 2006, with over 30 teams playing, the club had outgrown it.

The final game at Darcy's Field was played on Saturday 29th April 2006. The following day, Sunday 30th April, the first competitive match took place at the Woodlands. A new chapter had begun.

The move had been years in the making. A chance meeting in 2002 between Fintan Drury and Pius Finnegan, on the way to an Irish International match, was what set things in motion. A small, dedicated committee formed and got to work. The vision was a proper home for the club, pitches, facilities, and a clubhouse, built to last.

As Noel Magee, Development Director, wrote in May 2006: "In every sense, the move to the Woodlands is a new beginning for Greystones United Football Club."

Twenty years on, that new beginning has set the club on a path that continues to grow and evolve

Last Day at Darcy's Field

Roche blows the whistle on council over soccer pitches

■ Hundreds of tons of rubble have been piled up by the council at Woodlands, Greystones, where pitches for next season have been promised to the schoolboys club. Greystones United. Pictured on the site are club members Adam Scruff and John O'Connor (under 10 team), future players Elizabeth and Simon O'Connor, Mark Lyons (under 14 team), manager Liam O'Connor, Kathrina Lyons, vice-chairperson of the club and Senator Dick Roche.

UPCOMING EVENTS

ST PATRICK'S DAY PARADE

Greystones United will once again take part in the Greystones St Patrick's Day Parade and we would love to see as many of our players and members there as possible.

All players, coaches and families are invited to walk with the club on the day. It is always a great occasion for the community and a brilliant way to show the strength of the club.

Players are encouraged to wear their Greystones United kit or club colours. Bring your teammates, bring your families and help us represent the club with pride.

Everyone participating to meet at the clubhouse at 10am and we'll walk to our parade position from there.

EASTER CAMP

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN! ⚽

Don't miss out on a fantastic week of football at the GUAFC Easter Camp.

📅 **6th - 10th April**

⏰ **10am – 2pm**

💰 **€65 for the full week or €15 per day**

👧👦 **Ages: 5 – 12**

CLICK HERE TO BOOK

Players can choose to take part in a Mixed group or a Girls Only group.

Daily rates are available. For more information or to book daily places, contact Kiersten at administration@guafc.ie

Limited spaces available, so early booking is advised.

GUAFC CAFE & SHOP

We would like to remind you that the **GUAFC Cafe and Gear Shop** is open every **Saturday** from **9.30am to 1.30pm in the Clubhouse**.
Come and visit us to enjoy a range of delicious teas, coffees, and confectionery, and weather permitting, our famous BBQ.
But that's not all! The club **cafe** is also open on **Sundays** too!

THE GREYSTONES TO GO CUPS HAVE LANDED! ♻️☕

Our reusable Greystones To Go cups have finally arrived at the clubhouse and are ready to go. Here's how it works:

- A €2 rental will be added to the price of your hot drink
- When you return the cup, you get your €2 back

Or you can bring your own reusable cup.
It's a simple way to cut down on single-use waste while grabbing your coffee. Even better, a number of clubs and coffee shops around Greystones are taking part in the scheme. By working together on climate action initiatives like this, it also helps open up future funding opportunities for the club and the wider community.

CLUB GEAR

SHOP NOW

And if you're looking for some great GUAFC gear, be sure to check out our club gear shop, where you can find a variety of crested items, including shorts, socks, and training tops.

For your convenience, all items available in our gear shop can also be purchased through our club website for click and collect. Once your order is ready for collection, you'll receive an automated text message letting you know. We hope to see you soon at the GUAFC Cafe and Gear Shop!

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUERIES ON THE CLUB GEAR SHOP PLEASE REACH OUT TO ADMINISTRATION@GUAFC.IE.