

## **Fairford Town Football Club Return To Competitive Football Policy**

On Friday 17th July 2020 the UK Government agreed to the FA plan for the return to competitive grassroots football. As a result of this, The FA has published its guidelines to enable clubs to compete again with adherence to directives given to clubs to ensure a safe transition back for players, coaches, supporters and club officials.

Every club has been instructed to appoint a Covid-19 officer. The role of this person is to remain familiar with the most up to date FA guidance and ensure this is communicated throughout coaches, players, club officials and supporters. The appointed Covid-19 officer for Fairford Town is Jody Bevan, his contact details are as follows:

Jody Bevan  
[Jody.Bevan@sky.com](mailto:Jody.Bevan@sky.com)

Fairford Town Football Club have taken all these directives and risk assessed each one to provide a Policy statement which supports and meets the criteria set out by The FA. Some of these directives are mandatory and must be adhered to, the rest are advisory best practice to ensure safety is paramount.

The following guidance is for players, coaches, club officials, match officials, league officials, volunteers, parents/carers and spectators, no one is exempt from following this guidance. The following document has been broken into 4 definitive sections which will cover all of the match day protocol as directed by The FA:

- 1. CODE OF BEHAVIOUR**
- 2. BEFORE ANY FOOTBALL ACTIVITY TAKES PLACE**
- 3. DURING ALL FOOTBALL ACTIVITY**
- 4. AFTER ALL FOOTBALL ACTIVITY**

It is vital that all 3 parts of this document are read by anyone visiting Fairford Town Football Club, as they apply to all clubs returning to football and are put in place to protect everyone.

Currently no fans are allowed into grounds to watch football. Away teams should avoid bringing any unnecessary people with them and actually discourage fans/family from trying to attend games. Fairford Town FC reserves the right to expel anyone from the ground that has no direct footballing involvement with either home or away teams. As and when these guidelines change, we will re-assess and update this document with details for spectators.

### **1. CODE OF BEHAVIOUR**

Covid-19 is a highly infectious and dangerous disease. A resumption of contact play is only achievable if those involved create and maintain a controlled environment that minimises the threat of infection. Risk in sport cannot be completely eradicated but with caution and care these risks can be reduced. All those returning to competitive grassroots football must adapt the following FA code of behaviour:

- Be aware of your own personal health. If you show any of the covid-19 symptoms you must stay at home, inform the NHS Test and Trace and seek medical advice.
- Be responsible. Read the guidance provided by The FA and your club so that you are aware of the changes to the game and what is expected of you.
- Practice good hygiene. Wash your hands regularly and before, during, and after a game, and/or use the provided hand sanitizers.
- Where possible maintain social distancing. This will not always be possible in a competitive match environment and that is acceptable. However, before and after a game you should maintain social distancing.
- Support NHS Test and Trace. You will be asked to provide your details so that in the event of a covid-19 outbreak those potentially infected can be traced. This is to everyone's benefit so please co-operate. Your details will be kept for 21 days in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018.
- Do not spit. Spitting and the rinsing out of mouths is now a recognised risk to health and must not be done. Avoid shouting or raising your voice if face to face with other players.
- After the game. Be aware that other users may be waiting to use the facilities.

## 2. BEFORE ANY FOOTBALL ACTIVITY TAKES PLACE

In line with current government guidance, all participants (players, coaches, club officials, match officials, volunteers, and spectators) should self-check for symptoms of covid-19. No one should leave home to participate in football if they, or anyone they live with, has any of the symptoms listed in the Self Assessment Protocol:

- Before each activity all participants must follow the Self Assessment Protocol:

### **COVID-19 Self Assessment Protocol**

**Before each session, participants must complete the COVID-19 Self Assessment.**

**IF YOU HAVE EITHER ONE OF THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS OR FULFIL THE CRITERIA OF ANY POINT BELOW, YOU MUST NOT ATTEND:**

- A high temperature (37.8°C or higher)
- A new continuous cough
- Shortness of breath
- Sore throat
- A loss of, or change to sense of taste or smell
- Feeling generally unwell
- Persistent tiredness
- Been in close contact with/living with someone who is suspected of having COVID-19 or has tested positive for COVID-19.

**Please ensure that you complete the COVID-19 Self Assessment prior to each session. Thank you for your support!**

If an individual is symptomatic and/or living in a household with a possible covid-19 infection, they should remain at home and follow government guidance.

### **Travelling to the ground**

All participants and other attendees should follow best practice for travel to Fairford Town Football Club. Where possible participants should walk or cycle. People from a household or support bubble can travel together in a vehicle. If participants do have to travel with people outside their household or support bubble they should try to:

- Share the transport with the same people each time.
- Keep to small groups of people at any one time.
- Open windows for ventilation.
- Face away from each other.
- Clean the car between journeys using standard cleaning products, including door handles and other areas that people may touch.
- Ask the driver to wear a face covering.
- Consider seating arrangements to maximise distance between people in the vehicle and the wearing of face coverings on coaches or minibuses.

### **Upon arrival**

Upon arrival at Fairford Town Football Club all participants will be required to adhere to the one way systems in place and general movement around the ground following relevant signage. All attendees should follow best practice and wash their hands upon arrival for at least 20 seconds or sanitise immediately with the sanitiser provided, whilst maintaining the required social distancing measures as set by the Government.

Where possible, players, match officials and coaches must arrive changed and shower at home, however the changing rooms will be available if required, again users should maintain social distancing measures as set out by the Government. No more than 11 people are allowed in the changing rooms at any one time, and best efforts should be made to keep the numbers low in the changing rooms wherever possible.

Everyone entering Fairford Town Football Club will be required to provide name and contact details to support the NHS Test and Trace effort. This information will be held for 21 days in line with the government recreational team sport framework, in accordance with the data protection act 2018.

Outside toilets will be available but please be mindful of social distancing rules, and the importance of handwashing and sanitisation.

### **3. DURING ALL FOOTBALL ACTIVITY**

#### **Social distancing around matches**

Now competitive match play is permitted, in all settings, social distancing should be practised in line with Government guidelines. Supporters and other spectators should remain socially distanced whilst attending. Spectator groups must be restricted to discrete six-person gathering limits and spread out, in line with wider Government guidance, ensuring space for officials, coaches and substitutes. Match officials should observe the FA guidance in the same way as participants are required to.

#### **Covid-19 modifications in matches**

The following measures should be taken during matches:

- Pre-match handshake should not happen. Instead players will be asked to hand sanitise before kick-off.
- Team talk huddles should not take place. Team talks can take place as long as social distancing is observed.
- Warm-ups/cool downs should always observe social distancing.
- Coaches, other team staff, and substitutes are allowed, but must always observe social distancing measures on touch lines, technical areas, and the dug-outs. Social distancing must also be observed when a substitution is being made.
- Set plays. Referees and coaches should encourage players to get on with the game and not unnecessarily prolong set-up, such as defensive walls to limit the prolonged close marking.
- Goal posts should be wiped down before matches, at half time, and at the end of the game.
- Goal celebrations should be avoided.
- Interactions with referees and match assistants should only happen with players observing social distancing.
- Social distancing should be maintained by all participants during breaks in the game such as substitutions, injury treatments and half time.
- Water bottles or other refreshment containers should in no circumstances be shared. Participants are advised to bring their own drinks or refreshments, in a named container.

Hand sanitiser will be made available in the changing rooms, and in the dugout areas.

The sharing of equipment must be avoided where possible. Where equipment is to be shared, equipment must be cleaned before use by another person. Participants should take their kit home to wash it themselves, rather than have one person handling a large quantity of soiled materials. Where this is not possible each person handling the soiled kit, must wash their hands and sanitise immediately after, and appropriate arrangements should be made for the cleaning of the kit.

#### **Ball transfer**

The nature of football means that the ball is not frequently handled. When the ball goes out of play it should not be retrieved by non-participants and should be retrieved using the feet rather than the

hands where possible. Where there are breaks in the game if throw-ins or handling has occurred, the ball should be disinfected.

### **Spitting**

Everyone should refrain from spitting. If you need to sneeze or cough, you are encouraged to do so into a tissue or upper sleeve, and avoid touching your face. Ensure any tissues are disposed of in a sealed bin as soon as possible.

### **4. AFTER FOOTBALL ACTIVITY**

Hands should be washed and/or sanitised at the earliest opportunity and personal equipment should be wiped down with a disinfectant, as already covered participants should take their own kit home to wash it themselves. Kit bags should not be taken into the clubhouse or bar.

After matches, participants and attendees must maintain government mandated social distancing for social interaction. This includes any available changing rooms, showers, and clubhouse facilities.

Since July 4th Fairford Town Club clubhouse and bar has been open, and we have a simple one way system in place to ensure social distancing is upheld. Social distancing guidelines must be maintained while in the clubhouse and bar. When returning to the bar we ask that you bring your used glass with you, and dispose of any rubbish in the bins provided, to ensure best practice of hygiene in the clubhouse.

We ask all visitors and members to respectfully observe these requirements.

Fairford Town Football Club would like to thank you in advance for helping maintain Government and FA guidelines. By observing Government guidance and the football-specific protocols, we can work together to ensure the transition back to football is as smooth and safe as possible.