



CLAPTON
U
HOMOPHOBIA



CLAPTON CFC VS
ASHFORD UNITED FC
2.00PM SUNDAY, 2ND FEBRUARY, 2025

OLD SPOTTED DOG
London & South East Regional
Women's League Trophy
Second Round



LUCY SPOURS
MIDFIELDER



OUR BEAUTIFUL GAME, DESERVES TO BE BEAUTIFUL FOR EVERYONE

WE ARE BACKING THE FOOTBALL v HOMOPHOBIA (FvH) campaign throughout February.

Collectively, we want to demonstrate that football should be for everyone and through football we can break down the artificial barriers that exist in our community.

All seven of our teams have designated a game or training session. The designated FvH first team home games are today and Sat February 15 for the Men's First Team v Meridian VP. At these games:

- Our captains will wear rainbow armbands and our players rainbow laces to raise awareness
- The programmes feature articles from our players, coaches and volunteers.
- We have limited edition badges for sale with all profits donated to a LGBTQ+ campaign
- Buy some of our guest beer from Queer Brewing in Leyton, a queer and trans-owned brewery. They will donate 10p from every beer to a LGBTQ+ charity

PAULA GRIFFIN – PLAYER'S VIEW

TO BE HONEST, IT FEELS LIKE OUR world is either going to hell or is already there. In the States we are already seeing executive orders that could legislate trans people out of existence whilst in the UK gender affirming healthcare is being denied & attacks on LGBTQ+ plus individuals make the news almost daily. Our whole LGBTQ+ community is in the hair trigger.

As a defiantly out queer trans woman who has been involved in football for more than three decades make no mistake, these are worrying times.

For nearly 4 years Women's/ Non Binary football has offered me a safe space, a space where I can concentrate on being Paula the goalkeeper not Paula, the trans woman. At my first appointment with my Gender Identity Clinic, I was asked if I had a support network. I've the most amazing one, not just in the teams I play with but all the



friends and allies I have made in this game, teammates or opponents. I don't play in "men's football" for same reasons I don't walk into a men's toilet. I have no desire to face abuse, verbal & physical, for being myself.

2017 I was diagnosed with Stage 3 Bladder Cancer, surviving thanks to radical surgery to remove the cancerous organ.

I finally came out as transgender to zero surprise from my sisters and most of the rest of my family. I found a space in Goal Diggers where thanks to support & solidarity my latent talents

as a keeper reemerged.

At an age when most players are well past considering retirement, a friend asked if I'd like to join Clapton CFC for the 2023/24 season. It was an offer I could hardly say no to! I'm sure more to come too as every time I talk about hanging up my gloves, I'm told I'm not allowed to retire!! Indeed come July last year I was back training with CCFC, looking forward to another season.

While sport, and football in particular, has become more inclusive, more welcoming and more diverse in recent times, LGBT+ athletes have continued to find themselves marginalised in sport. We've become targets of those who wish to exploit our participation, even our very existence, for political or financial gain. It needs to be shown that it's the women who play the game who welcome trans women in face of the bile of politicians, media and hatemongers.

A SAFE SPACE, A SPACE WHERE I CAN CONCENTRATE ON BEING PAULA THE GOALKEEPER NOT PAULA, THE TRANS WOMAN



ALICE SHARPE **WOMEN'S HEAD COACH**

LAST WEEK'S 3-2 DEFEAT TO RICHMOND & KEW was a tough one to take, especially after such a strong first-half performance. Leading 2-0 at the break, we showed exactly what we are capable of—sharp passing, disciplined defending, and clinical finishing, all on a pitch that was more swamp than playing surface. The opening 45 minutes were a testament to our teamwork and energy, and that's something we should take confidence from moving forward.

Of course, football is a 90-minute game, and the second half was a reminder of the importance of managing momentum. Richmond & Kew adapted to our football, and we struggled to regain control once the tide turned. There are lessons to take from that—but setbacks are part of the journey, and we'll come back stronger.

Today I should be introducing our cup fixture. It's a big one. But there are bigger things taking place away from the pitch. The proposed changes to the women's

football pyramid have sparked plenty of debate, here is my two cents. Parachuting in teams with WSL badges and fundings means that money isn't going into local community or fan owned clubs that have been driving forces in the women's game for decades. We already have elite players throughout the pyramid, fund the teams they play for. If you want to invest in the game spend it in the grassroots, create access to affordable pitches, invest in infrastructure for rural populations and address the inequalities across the women's game, that is dominated by the white middle classes and governed by men.

It's also Football v Homophobia week here, football has always been a queer and safe space for me. It enabled me to move away from home when I was 16 and be myself unashamedly. Eventually it was also where I met my wife. Imagine if we used money from a corrupt FA and spent it on ensuring football is a safer space for everyone... a different football is possible. Forza Clapton.

COACH PROFILE: AMII GRIFFITH



PLACE OF BIRTH:
Lewisham
WHERE YOU LIVE:
Lewisham (Up the 'Sham)
DAY JOB: Pretend writer
mostly coaching

PREVIOUS CLUBS:
Stonewall, Hillyfielders
(and loads I still coach at)
**ALL TIME FAVOURITE
PLAYER:** Alex Scott. Toss
up between her and
Rachel Yankey, seeing
women that looked like me
playing football was a big
deal in my formative years.
**FAVOURITE TEAM,
APART FROM CLAPTON
CFC:** Arsenal
**BIGGEST HIGH IN
FOOTBALL:** My u12s
player scoring a
halfway line screamer.

**LOWEST POINT IN
FOOTBALL:** Having to leave
clubs/teams where I've
made lovely connections
with the players
LIKES AND HOBBIES:
Football. Food
(cooking and eating).
Sleeping. Running (a
hobby not a like)
DISLIKES: Tiredness.
Early mornings. The most
evil tool of capitalism
- the alarm clock.
Transphobia. Ignorance.
**FAVOURITE COUNTRY
VISITED:** Spain

FAVOURITE FOOD: Food -
pizza. Cuisine - Mexican
FAVOURITE FILM: Brick/
Memento/Fight Club.
But I've probably watch
Bring It On more than
any other film.
FAVOURITE TV: Buffy the
Vampire Slayer, followed
closely by Veronica Mars.
FAVOURITE MUSIC: Late
90s/early 00s pop. S Club
FOOTBALLING AMBITION:
To coach Arsenal WFC
**PERSON YOU'D MOST LIKE
TO MEET:** Eliza Dushku to
sate my teenage angst



ASHFORD UNITED FC

WELCOME TO TODAY'S VISITING PLAYERS,
COACHES, SUPPORTERS AND OFFICIALS

GOALKEEPERS

JANELL MATHURIN
CHELSIE SPARKS

DEFENDERS

MARTA BOIRO
MIM CHADWICK
ELENA DIANA
LENNY HOLMES
ANNIE LYONS
JULIA MOULTON
NOORA OIKARAINEN
ALLANA SCOBLE
ALICE SHARPE
KAYLEE SHURETY
EVA VAN DER VLIET

MIDFIELDERS

TAIYAH EVANS
ANA HOLMES
TAMMY HYMAS
CHLOE OWEN
LUCY SPOURS
LI STEINER
EGLE TREZZI
RHIANNE WRIGHT

FORWARDS

MARTA CASANOVAS
EMILY LINK
MARIA MENDONCA
AIMEE SHAW
OSKIA SUMMERS
SOPHIE UGUR

ASHFORD UNITED FC

- Lily Barrett
- Holly Diamond
- Cerys Ellis
- Kayleigh Harris
- Karis Howard
- Yasmin Howard
- Natasha Hurst
- Megan Jenner
- Esmee Ker-Stroud
- Didi Lloyd
- Nicole Pepper Scott
- Bethany Senior
- Esmee Sword
- Priya Thapa
- Chloe Vaughan

WOMEN'S FOOTBALL BEGAN IN THE Kent town with Ashford Ladies in 1971. The team enjoyed plenty of promotions and cup glory over the following decades and even reached the Women's FA Cup quarter-finals in 1973.

In 2022 they became part of Isthmian League men's side Ashford United. That season they won promotion to the London & South East Women's Regional League Premier Division, the fifth tier, and survived at the level last season.

FORM GUIDE

The fantastically nicknamed Nuts & Bolts collected just one point from their first 9 games, but have turned the corner since and recorded a win and a draw.

PREVIOUS MEETINGS

We've played twice and lost narrowly both times. In November 2022, a then capacity crowd of 500 witnessed our third ever game at the Old Spotted Dog Ground in the Women's FA Cup. Despite Annie Lyons' goal, we lost 2-1. That same season, in April 2023, we met in the L&SERWFL Trophy final at Maidstone United. CCFC battled back from 3-0 down to level it thanks to goals from Teju Callisto (2) and Verity Phillips. That took the game to extra time, where Ashford sadly won it 5-3.

PLAYERS TO WATCH

Bethany Senior has an impressive six goals in 10 games this season.

UPCOMING FIXTURES

WOMEN'S FIRST TEAM

DATE	TIME	COMP	OPPONENTS/VENUE
Feb 09	2pm	LSERWFL (A)	Actonians Reserves (at Gunnersbury Park)
Five week gap with no fixtures scheduled yet			
Mar 16	2pm	LSERWFL (H)	Brentford (at Old Spotted Dog Ground)
Mar 23	1.30pm	LSERWFL (A)	Leatherhead (at Fetcham Grove)
Mar 30	2pm	LSERWFL (H)	Richmond Park (at Old Spotted Dog Ground)

MEN'S FIRST TEAM

DATE	TIME	COMP	OPPONENTS/VENUE
Feb 08	3pm	SCEFL (H)	Rochester United (at Old Spotted Dog Ground)
Feb 15	3pm	SCEFL (H)	Meridian VP (at Old Spotted Dog Ground)
Feb 22	3pm	SCEFL (A)	Faversham Strike Force (at The Mount)
Mar 01	3pm	SCEFL (H)	Bridon Ropes (at Old Spotted Dog Ground)
Mar 08	3pm	SCEFL (H)	Tooting Bec (at Old Spotted Dog Ground)