

HEAR THE SODS

The Official Matchday Programme of Chipping Sodbury Town FC



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PART OF ENGLAND FOOTBALL

Saturday 1st August 2026 | 3pm

CHIPPING SODBURY TOWN

VS LUDLOW TOWN

CHAIRMAN'S WORDS

Welcome back to The Ridings for the start of another season.

Whether you're a regular supporter, one of our many volunteers, joining us for the first time, or travelling with today's visitors, thank you for being here. I'd also like to extend a warm welcome to today's match officials and everyone involved with Ludlow Town. We hope you enjoy your visit and have a safe journey home.

There's always something special about opening day. A new season brings fresh optimism, new faces, renewed ambition and another opportunity to build on everything we've achieved together as a club.

Behind the scenes, preparations for the new campaign have been underway for many months. I'd like to thank our management team, including some new additions and the welcome return of the familiar face of Justin Bishop, along with our players, volunteers, committee members, sponsors and everyone who has given their time to ensure we're ready for the season ahead. Community football simply wouldn't exist without the incredible people who quietly get things done week after week.

Our ambition remains unchanged. We want Chipping Sodbury Town FC to be a club the whole community can be proud of—competitive on the pitch, welcoming off it, and providing opportunities for people of all ages. Every season is another step on that journey, and we're excited about what lies ahead.

We've also continued to invest off the pitch. Over the summer we've installed a new bar, refreshed the clubhouse, created additional storage space and carried out a range of repairs and improvements. We continue to welcome new sponsors and players, submit bids to help develop our facilities, and continue to strengthen our partnership with St Nicholas FC. There are also some exciting developments on the horizon, so watch this space.

To our players today, enjoy the occasion, represent the badge with pride and give everything for each other. To our supporters, your backing really does make a difference, and we look forward to seeing you behind the team throughout the season.

Finally, thank you once again for your continued support. I hope you enjoy today's match, and here's to an exciting season ahead for everyone connected with the club.

Up the Sods!

James Mapstone



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BACK IN TIME



In the summer of 1959 Cliff Phelps decided it was time football association football was brought back to the town after six long years since the boys of the town had donned the blue and white of Sodbury in the Western League. After several meetings at The Bell Inn the new club was formed. Major L.M. Harris was President, Mr. E Purbrick Chairman, Mr. C Phelps Vice Chairman, Club Captain Dennis Greenaway and Youth Captain Michael Boulton. In the initial 1959/60 season they entered a senior team into The Dursley & Wotton League and a team into the Youth section. The following season Sodbury joined the Bristol and District League and throughout the 60's remained in Division 3.

The 1970's began with relegation after finishing bottom of Division 3 and the slump continued with further relegation in the 1971/72 Season. The mid-70's saw a few changes with the foundations of the club as it is today being laid. Mike Fox became Player Manager and 'The Sods' added a Sunday side. In the 1976/77 season, a third place finish in Division 5 secured promotion and two years later they went one better finishing runners-up in Division 4. The decade finished off with more celebration as the 1979/80 3rd Division title was secured twenty years after the club's rebirth.

The 1980's began were the 70's left off and a fourth place finish gave Sodbury promotion to Bristol & District Division 1. 1981/82 saw the re-establishment of a Reserve side and by the end of the season, the First Team had gained a fifth promotion in six years to the Bristol & District Senior Division. Life in the Senior Division started with a mid-table finish and the end of the season saw Mike Fox's testimonial and an Ashton Gate appearance against Mangotsfield United. After finishing 15th in 1985/86 'The Sods' were relegated to Division 1, where they remained until finishing runners up in 1988/89.

The 1990's kicked off with a third place finish and promotion to the Bristol Premier Combination Division 1. In 1990/91 the new clubhouse and changing rooms were built with players and committee members contributing their trades. In 1992/93 a fourth place finish and the winning of the Premier Cup in 1992/93 became the club's best season. The club remained in Division 1 until the end of the nineties, when they were promoted to the Premier Division for the 1999/00.

After three seasons in the Premier Division, 'The Sods' tasted relegation and started 2002/03 with a change in management as ex-players Les Underdown and Jeff Clark took the reins. A mid-table finish in their first season, saw Les leave and Jeff take the hot seat and whilst he oversaw a similar league position there was better news for the Reserves as an exciting squad secured a league title.

2004/05 ended in a disappointing third place for the Sods but the club continued its expansion by adding a third team. And the previous seasons disappointment was all forgotten in 2005/06 with a championship win and promotion back to the Premier Division.

A good season for the club followed as the First Team finishing mid-table in the Premier Division and both the Reserves and Thirds winning promotion. More success was to follow in 2007/08 as the First Team clinched the Premier Division title and the Reserves became champions of Bristol & District Division 1. The first season in the Gloucester County started with a change of manager and finished with 'The Sods' propping up the league table after only five league wins however the club were given a relegation reprieve. Mark Stenner was appointed manager, and he provided stability in the County League.

The 2010's produced the club's most successful time in their history. Mark Stenner had taken the team to a third place finish in the County League in 2010/11 before being succeeded by Scott Gibson. A disappointing bottom place finish was followed by two seasons of rebuilding and climbing the before new manager Karl Reese took the club to the dizzy heights of Western League football in 2014/15 with a third place finish in his first season. Not a bad start for the new gaffer but it got even better when a combination of great football and some fresh faces delivered the Western League Division 1 Championship the following season. 2016/17 in the Western League Premier Division was challenging but the clubs most successful season so far ended with a very creditable 13th place finish whilst also competing in the F.A. Vase.

2017/18 was always going to be a tough mountain to climb. Karl Reese had departed along with half of the First Team. Enter new manager Neil Simons with a season in the Western League Premier to take on with and your first game is the clubs first ever game in the F.A. Cup. The season ended with a 13th place finish, an F.A Cup victory and a quarter final place in the GFA Challenge trophy.

Early in the 2018/19 Season Neil Simons decided to leave the club and shortly afterwards Joe White was appointed. The club finished the season in 10th and had the best F.A Cup run in the club's history. The club were then successful in their appeal against the Football Associations sideways move to the Hellenic League so another 2019/20 season in the Western League Premier beckoned but the uncertainty it created led to several players departing the club before a ball was kicked. Three weeks before the season started, Justin Bishop and Scott Gibson took caretaker control of side and remained in place until the League came to an abrupt halt as the F.A. announced on the 26th of March 2020 that the Step 1-7 game and all grassroots football leagues and competitions under its umbrella had ended as a result of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. All results for the season would be expunged.

BACK IN TIME

The 2020's began with Jeff Roberts and his management steering the First Team, but the season was to be curtailed due to Covid-19. The 2021/22 season looked more promising with the new F.A. restructuring of the leagues; the football club then began their journey with Jeff and his team in the Hellenic League Premier Division. Towards the end of the 2022/23 season a new First Team manager, James Mapstone was onboard, but it was to finish with relegation from the Hellenic League Premier Division.

2023/2024 in Hellenic League Division One showed signs of promise with new players joining the squad. With a good pre-season under the belt there was plenty of optimism, but football has a way of knocking you back and the team picked up injuries to key players which they never recovered from. After a bad run of results and players leaving the club, it was time for another change with Wicks manager, Kevin Ashwood joining the club, supported by James Mapstone and his own backroom team. Despite an influx of new players, the team finished in the drop zone only to be spared relegation due to other club movements.

The 2024/25 season was more successful as manager; Kevin Ashwood assembled a good crop of young but inexperienced players at Step 6 level. Despite playing some good football the deserved results never came. Following Kevins departure, Jeff Roberts who had earlier rejoined the club in a supporting role took on the managers role once again. The team rallied and climbed to a 10th place finish.

Ahead of the 2024/25 season the club added an Over 35 Veterans side and an Under 14's team as part of a longer-term strategy to build a youth to senior pathway. The Vets would go onto to earn a first season promotion whilst the U14's secured a superb league and cup double.

The 2025/26 season was another tinged with disappointment as a youthful Sodbury squad offered plenty of encouragement but ultimately stumbled at key stages, eventually finishing 13th in Hellenic League Division One. But there was further success for the now Under 15's with a second consecutive league and cup double.

In the early part of 2026, there was also the exciting announcement of a partnership-come-merger with near neighbours St Nicholas Youth FC bringing together two great clubs with over 50 teams and 800 players. The main ambition is to deliver an all-weather, 3G facility at The Ridings to meet the growing needs of players, coaches, and supporters.

Off the pitch there has been a great deal of work put in over the last couple of seasons by a very loyal group of volunteers and partners they strive to improve every aspect of club. It is because of these fantastic people that we continue to write the clubs history whilst ensuring it serves the wider community.

With a new season comes plenty of excitement and determination and we hope to have plenty more to celebrate come April 2027.



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OUR VISITORS



Ludlow Football Club has a long history, originally being founded in 1890.

They have many teams within the club ranging from:

Juniors – U8's-U16's – Various Herefordshire Leagues

Ladies – Adults – Midwest Counties Women's League

Reserves – Adults – Herefordshire Premier League

First Team – Adults – Hellenic League Division One

The First Team, after a break from football was reset in 2017 where they competed in the West Midlands Football League Division Two. Ludlow struggled in the first two seasons before having a successful third where they were in runners-up spot before COVID-19 hit putting a stop to Football.

Ludlow moved leagues in 2020, entering the Salop Leisure League Premier Division (Shropshire) who gained NLS Feeder League status. Ludlow's first season started well as they were once again in second place before another COVID-19 hiatus.

Once football restarted the next two seasons saw a 4th and 2nd place finish. It was however the 2023/24 season that saw all the hard work pay off with Ludlow to going on to win the league with 87 points, losing only once.

Ludlow applied to be promoted into Step 6 and after getting accepted they were placed into Hellenic League Division One for the 2024/25 season making Ludlow the first Shropshire team to play in the league.

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JUSTIN BISHOP

ASSISTANT MANAGER: JOHN BRITTON

GOALKEEPER COACH: GEORGE HALE

PHYSIO: KEN PURNELL

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ASSISTANT MANAGER: CHRIS WALDRON

COACH: DAVE COOPER

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JAMES BYATT
WILLIAM CASTLETON-BURROWS
RYAN CLARKE
CAM COLE
GEORGE CRUMP
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MATCH GALLERY

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25TH AUGUST (PRE-SEASON FRIENDLY)



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LEAGUE TABLE

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		L	F	A					
	1 Alcester Town	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	2 Bewdley Town	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	3 Brimscombe & Thrupp	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	4 Bromyard Town	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	5 Carterton	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	6 Cheltenham Saracens	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	7 Chipping Sodbury Town	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	8 Clanfield	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	9 Ludlow Town	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	10 Lydney Town	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	11 Newent Town	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	12 Redditch Borough	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	13 Sharpness	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	14 Shortwood United	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	15 Stonehouse Town	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	16 Studley	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	17 Swindon Supermarine Reserves	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	18 Wantage Town	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

SATURDAY 1ST AUGUST FIXTURES

Alcester Town	v	Brimscombe & Thrupp
Bromyard Town	v	Wantage Town
Carterton	v	Sharpness
Chipping Sodbury Town	v	Ludlow Town
Clanfield	v	Stonehouse Town
Lydney Town	v	Bewdley Town
Newent Town	v	Studley
Redditch Borough	v	Cheltenham Saracens
Swindon Supermarine Reserves	v	Shortwood United



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Image courtesy of Alex James

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