

Bulls Head Marchington Football Club

Grass Pitch Development @ Silver Lane, Marchington

Ian Morgan and Brett Brown (October 2021)



From March 2020 (pre-involvement in the programme), to October 2021.

After initial consultation with Staffordshire FA, which subsequently led to a pitch inspection by the GMA Regional Pitch Advisor, Kevin Duffill, we embraced the pitch improvement programme at Silver Lane, Marchington, and the pitches have dramatically improved since carrying out the various actions in our plan. With the help of the Staffordshire FA and the Football Foundation, we secured funding to begin the revitalisation of both the 11-a-side and 7-a-side pitches.

In July 2020 we signed an agreement with Marchington Parish Council (our landlord) to maintain and develop the two pitches on the site on a long-term basis. Below is the timeline of the development work undertaken and there is no doubt both pitches have significantly improved, becoming more resilient to flooding/standing water, and general wear and tear. The pitch also had a depression near one of the goalmouths, as the football pitches sit on reclaimed land from when the army was based at Marchington Barracks. As part of our action plan, the depression was rectified in June 2021 in readiness for the new season.

Local comments have been very complimentary and there is no doubt that people of all ages have used these facilities far more during the pandemic. Indeed, the main pitch has improved enough for the Uttoxeter and District Sunday League to ask us to host finals, which we had to sadly decline because of time constraints with the various pitch treatments and works.

We have now been able to improve the pitches further via the investment into new equipment and machinery, which was recommended as part of the pitch improvement process and for which we were able to access Football Foundation funding support for. We replaced the old goals made from scaffold poles with professional fully integrated modern goals. We purchased a spray line-marker from Rigby Taylor replacing an old lime line-marker. The new pitch maintenance equipment includes a compact tractor and rotary roller mower attachment, which replaced our existing ride-on mower. We have also invested in a secure steel shipping container to house this new equipment. Again, all of this has been made possible via grants from the Football Foundation as part of the pitch improvement programme.

Timeline of work undertaken to date:

- 25/07/2020 – Signed grass pitch maintenance agreement with Marchington Parish Council.
- 27/07/2020 – Selective weed killer treatment applied to pitches.
- 18/08/2020 – Shockwave decompaction carried out.
- 25/08/2020 – Pitches disc-seeded in 3 directions.
- By November 2020 we noticed a sunken area to the right of one of the goalmouths.
- March 2021 – Season restarted following Covid lockdown.
- June 2021– Season completed.
- June 2021 – 32 tonnes of topsoil applied to sunken area and levelled.
- 04/06/2021 – Scarification carried out.
- 17/06/2021 – Pitches vertidraind.
- 18/06/2021 – Pitches disc-seeded.
- 30/06/2021 – Selective weed control applied.
- 30/07/2021 – Purchase of compact tractor, roller mower, and combination unit.
- August 2021 – Continuous mowing with new equipment.
- September 2021 – New season starts
- 17/10/2021 – Shockwaved pitches (some stones coming to the surface which have had to be removed and holes filled).

Below is also a collection of photographs showing some of the work undertaken in year one of our involvement in the programme. We have used Staffs FA recommended contractors to carry out all the treatments and we intend to continue along these lines as we develop an annual maintenance programme.





