

# THURLOW NUNN FOOTBALL LEAGUE

## GUIDANCE MANUAL FOR CLUB SECRETARIES

### EASTERN COUNTIES LEAGUE CLUBS

#### for season 2025-26

This manual is designed for secretaries of clubs in Thurlow Nunn Eastern Counties League Premier and First Divisions.

It is to be read in conjunction with the Rules of the Competition and attempts to give an indication of the tasks along with tips relating to errors and situations that can arise and how best to deal with these.

### **LEAGUE EXPECTATION OF CLUBS**

The League asks that clubs and their spectators:

- show respect to others involved in the game including match officials, opposition players, coaches, managers, officials, and spectators.
- show respect to the League Directors, Management Committee and Officers.
- **do not**
  - a. engage in any form of abuse either verbally, on e-mail or on social media, WhatsApp etc.,
  - b. indulge in vexatious behaviour which is deemed not to be in the best interests of the League, and
  - c. indulge in any activity or communication which is potentially likely to bring the League into disrepute

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## **BEFORE THE SEASON**

The so-called 'Close Season' is probably anything but for the club secretary who has many tasks to complete during the period between the end of one season in May and the start of another in late July. There follows a check list of tasks needed to be completed during that period with relevant dates added.

Contact contract players to establish their intention	before 1 <sup>st</sup> June
Window opens for affiliation to County Football Association	Early June
Receive formal notice from League of Annual General Meeting	1 <sup>st</sup> June
Send form to FA regarding contract players	1 <sup>st</sup> June
Receive notice from the League to register details for new season on HelpWithit	30 <sup>th</sup> June
Receive invoice from League for Annual Subscriptions (Part 1)	1 <sup>st</sup> July
Complete information on HelpWithit registering details for new season	14 <sup>th</sup> July
Ensure affiliated to County Football Association	30 <sup>th</sup> June
Pay annual subscription (Part 1) invoice to League	31 <sup>st</sup> July
Register at least sixteen players with the League – before	12 <sup>th</sup> July

### **Contract Players**

Within 7 days of the first Saturday in May (or the date of the last competitive match of the first team i.e. any play off or final's matches) the Club must give notice in writing to any players at the Club who have FA contracts indicating whether the Club wishes to extend their contract or to exercise any option therein and the player must acknowledge any offer within 28 days of the date of the letter. Then the FA's form must be completed and returned to the FA by 1 June with the details of those players who are to be retained at the Club. There are many elements relating to these actions which can be found under Rule C 'Relating to Players' on the FA's website.

### **Affiliation with the County Football Association**

All clubs must be affiliated with their local County Football Association before being allowed to play in any affiliated competition or friendly matches. The window for affiliation opens at various dates, more often now in early June and the process is undertaken via the Football Association's Club Portal. Affiliation should be carried out by the club as early as possible to avoid any potential issues.

The League must be sanctioned by the Football Association before any fixtures can take place. Any Clubs not affiliated by the time their fixtures start will be charged with failing to fulfill.

## **Registering Club Details with the League for the new season**

### **HelpWithit Process**

The League will use the HelpWithit system which will collate all clubs' details including managers, ground details, and will populate the live clubs' information system where all clubs will be able to see who is running a team and who to contact and where the grounds are located etc. Every club will have their own portal where details are stored, and the system will show a club all the charges and invoices that are sent from the League. Clubs will be able to send in any mitigation via the portal. Clubs can and should change any contact details such as a new mobile number or email. The system works well if clubs keep their information up to date.

### **Annual General Meeting**

The Annual General Meeting normally takes place at Diss Town Football Club at 2:00 p.m. on the fourth Saturday in June. All clubs must be represented at the meeting. Failure to do so may result in a maximum fine of £200.

The 2025 AGM will be held on Saturday, 28<sup>th</sup> June 2025.

### **Invoice for Annual Subscriptions**

The Annual Subscription is £350 plus VAT per team and is payable in two halves in July and December. The invoice also contains an adjustment for match officials' expenses equalisation from the previous season.

The invoice must be paid by 31<sup>st</sup> July. Payment can either be made by cheque payable to 'Eastern Counties Football League Limited' or by payment directly into the League's bank account, details of which can be obtained from the League Treasurer, Nigel Spurling.

### **Registration of Players**

Clubs must have at least sixteen players registered with the League fourteen days before the start of the season. The start of the season is deemed to be the date of the club's first fixture.

### **Fixtures**

The League's Fixtures' Secretary will request from clubs, details of their ground availability, fixture preferences, etc. for the forthcoming season. Fixtures for the whole season will be released as soon as possible after the Step 3 and 4 league fixtures become available.

The first league fixtures are scheduled for 26<sup>th</sup> July 2025.

Scheduled fixtures inevitably become postponed as the season progresses because of cup ties, bad weather, etc. and new dates will be advised to clubs by the relevant Fixtures' Secretary. Except when ground sharing with a team in a higher league Clubs are expected to have their teams and pitch available at any time during the season for a

rearranged fixture, although at least 7 days' notice will be given for any rearrangement. Occasionally scheduled fixtures will be moved if it is to the overall benefit of the competition.

## **BEFORE THE MATCH**

There follows a list of tasks that need to be completed before each match.

- Ensure that all players intended to participate in the match are properly registered by checking on the Full-Time website.

### **If your club is the home team:**

- Notify your opponents and the appointed match officials of the date and time of kick-off and the team colours including the colour of the goalkeeper's jersey at least five days before the date of the match. Should there be a subsequent change of match official immediately contact the new appointee with the details of the match as above.
- Match Officials for the Premier Division and First Division North and South matches, together with the Challenge Cup are appointed by the League's Appointment Officer (John Tythcott 07966 534545) and are notified by an automatic email from the Full-Time system. The information for all three Divisions will also be available to clubs on MOAS.
- The League has not sanctioned the wearing of coloured shirts by the match officials, so you need to ensure that there is no clash of colours with the match officials' black shirts.
- Ensure that a match programme is prepared for the game. A digital programme is now allowed but a club must submit a sample copy to the Ground Standards Officer requesting permission for this.

### **If your club is the away team:**

- 5 days prior to the scheduled fixture, send your opponent's details of the proposed team you intend to field along with club history and up-to-date pen pictures of your players registered with the competition.
- Acknowledge receipt of the details of the match sent by the home club and advise of the colours your team will wear including the colour of the goalkeeper's jersey.
- Ensure that the correctly coloured kit is taken to the match. Please remember that in the event of any colour clash it is the away team that must change.
- Ensure that your club will be represented by at least one director/official (other than team management staff) and that the person(s) will make themselves known to the home club officials on arrival at the ground.

- Ensure that your players and staff are expecting to attend the after-match hospitality provided by your hosts. If they are not, then you should inform the home club immediately so that food is not prepared unnecessarily.

### **Kick-Off Times**

The standard kick-off times are:

Saturdays	3:00 p.m.
Midweek	7.45 p.m.
Bank Holidays	3:00 p.m.
Boxing Day	11:00 a.m.

These times may be varied by agreement between the two clubs and the relevant League Fixture Secretary.

### **Postponements**

If a match is postponed for any reason the home club must immediately notify their opponents, the appointed match-officials and the relevant League Fixture Secretary.

A club cannot postpone a match because of the state of the ground. This can only be done by the appointed referee to the fixture or if that referee should be unavailable then another referee who must be of at least the same grade as the appointed referee may make the decision. Such arrangement should only, however, take place after discussion with the appointed referee.

In cases of doubtful conditions and expected poor weather please remember the distance to be travelled by your opponents and contact them early and keep them informed of the situation to avoid unnecessary journeys being made.

Postponements Guidelines for Clubs can be found in Appendix No 1.

The new date for any postponed fixture will be arranged by the relevant League Fixture Secretary.

If a match is postponed after the match officials arrive and for reasons outside the control of the clubs, e.g., pitch frozen, then the match officials will be entitled to the full travel expenses and half their match fee.

### **Failure to fulfil a fixture**

The penalty for postponing a match without a justifiable reason within the rules is a maximum fine of £500.

## **AT THE MATCH**

There follows a list of tasks that must be completed at each match.

- Ensure the opponents are met upon arrival and that their committee members and officials are conducted to the hospitality area and served light refreshments.
- Ensure the match officials are met upon arrival and shown to their dressing room. If hospitality is provided, then they should be shown to the appropriate area. Should a Referee Observer attend the game they should also be provided with light refreshments on their arrival and at half-time.
- Each club should provide the team sheet containing the names of the players participating in the match to the three match officials and a representative of your opponents at least 45 minutes before the scheduled kick-off time.
- The match officials should provide the home club with details of their fees and expenses prior to the game. If requesting payment online, the match officials should also provide bank details in order that the expenses can be paid via BACS transfer within 48 hours of the game. If any of the match officials request payment by cash, they must advise the club at least 5 days before the game, usually when acknowledging their match confirmation to the club. The club must adhere to this request, and cash payment be made in the match officials' changing room immediately after the match. Failure to comply would result in the club being charged.
- The fees for season 2025-26 are:  
Referee £50, Assistant £40  
Mileage rate 40p  
  
In addition, if Congestion Charges, Parking Fees and/or Low Emission Zone Charges are incurred then these can be claimed as well.
- The official League Match Ball must be used in all matches. Three of these balls, inflated to the correct pressure as indicated on the ball, should be presented to the referee in his dressing room before the match.

### **Admission Prices**

The League has the option to set the minimum price for admission to be charged for fixtures in the Competition. This is currently set at £4.

Clubs may have a maximum of three matches each season where they can vary admission charges including allowing free entry. Written permission from Kevin Lorkins (League Secretary) must be obtained for any of these.

## **Ground Passes**

Each club is issued with six ground passes. These can be used by the club for six persons to gain free entrance to a match in the Competition when that club is the away team.

Ground passes are also issued to League officers and Management Committee members. These can be used to gain free entrance to any match in the Competition.

## **Further Policy on ground admittance**

If the Clubs cannot agree, then the following league policy will come into effect:  
Admittance of a squad into the ground without charge shall be 16 players plus Manager, Assistant Manager, Coach and physio, up to a maximum of 20.

## **Colours and Shirt Numbers**

The colours registered by each Club shall be worn when playing at home. Shirts must be numbered such that officials and spectators can clearly identify the numbers. It is recommended that shirts with black backs are not registered as the match officials may be unable to distinguish a player from other match officials from behind and may require the team to change their shirts. Clubs should ensure that they have sufficient kit available to accommodate a change of kit due to a blood injury.

When playing away, clubs must wear kits which is clearly distinguishable from that of their opponents and the match officials.

Both goalkeepers in a match must wear a kit different from that of any other players and match officials.

## **Substitutes**

A maximum of five substitutes may be used from a list of five nominated on the team sheet. When making a substitution a club must hold up the substitute board as provided by the League or an electronic substitutes board which has been approved by the League. Failure to do so may result in the club being charged. A maximum of three substitutes per team can be warming up at any one time and should use the touchline behind the Assistant Referee on the same side as the technical areas.

## **Bench and Technical Area**

All team officials and substitutes seated on the bench must be included on the official team sheet provided to the referee.

Only one person at a time is allowed to give instructions from the technical area and a maximum of two officials from each team can be standing at any one time.

All persons seated on the bench should wear the provided bibs which carry both the sponsor's name and the 'Keep it Down for the Kids' logo.

## **Sin Bins**

Sin Bins will only be used for dissent by word or action and will only apply to players on the field of play. A player cannot be substituted whilst in the Sin Bin.

## **Abandonments**

If a match is abandoned for any reason the home club must immediately notify the relevant League Fixtures Secretary.

If a match is abandoned before half-time the home team must issue a voucher to each spectator valid for free admission for when the match is replayed.

## **AFTER THE MATCH**

There follows a list of tasks that need to be completed after each match.

- At the completion of every game, and certainly on the day of the game, both clubs are required to submit the result of the game via the Full-Time SMS Results Service. Each club can nominate a maximum of two mobile telephone numbers which must be recorded on the Full-Time system.

Guidance Notes have been circulated to all Club Secretaries and further copies can be obtained from the League's IT Officer via [heather.trevers@btinternet.com](mailto:heather.trevers@btinternet.com).

- Both clubs should receive from the referee via email after the game, a Referee's Match Report detailing Misconduct by Players and Breaches of League Rules and Directives.
- There is a cooling down period which operates after a match. This means that any club official wishing to discuss the match with the match officials should not approach them until at least 20 minutes after the match has finished.
- The match result form and statistics must be entered into Full-Time. The additional information required is the attendance figure and match officials' expenses and details of how this should be done are included in The Match Statistics Guidance Notes.
- Club Marking of Referees must be completed via MOAS in accordance with the Guidance Notes circulated to all Senior clubs by the League.

## **Match Statistics**

The Full-Time and MOAS Systems should be updated with the details of the match as soon as possible after the match but no later than three days after. Guidance Notes have been sent to all Club Secretaries, and it is important to note that failure to complete the statistics will lead to charges being raised against the club. However, please note that the

referees' marks cannot be entered until the referee has completed his/her Post-Match Confirmation and you will receive an email from the system notifying you when this has been done. The three days allowed to enter the marks are counted from this time.

Further copies of the Guidance Notes can be obtained from the League's IT Officer via [heather.trevers@btinternet.com](mailto:heather.trevers@btinternet.com).

## **ANNUAL PRESENTATION EVENING**

An Annual Presentation Evening is held each season, and the next one will take place in May 2026, venue to be confirmed. Each club is mandated to purchase two tickets for the event. Invoices for the event will be sent to clubs at the start of February for settlement by the end of the month.

At the event prize money will be distributed to the winners. Any club not represented at the event will forfeit any prize money won.

## **FA ACCREDITATION**

The Eastern Counties League is FA Accredited, and we require all Clubs to become Accredited. Guidance on this should be sought with your County FA.

No Club that is not accredited will be able to benefit from the fair play or performance awards.

## **PROMOTION AND RELEGATION**

At the end of the 2025-26 season, the club that finishes top of the Eastern Counties League Premier Division shall be promoted to Step 4. Should the team finishing top decline promotion to Step 4 then they will be relegated to Step 6.

The eligible clubs that finish second to fifth will contest a set of play-off matches. The club that finishes second will play at home to the club that finishes fifth and the club that finishes third will play at home to the club that finishes fourth. The winners of the two fixtures in each division will play another match on the ground of the team that finished highest during the season. The winners will be promoted to Step 4.

Clubs finishing in the bottom two positions of the Eastern Counties League Premier Division will be relegated to Step 6.

The top clubs playing in each of the Eastern Counties League Division One (North) and the Eastern Counties League Division One (South) will be promoted to Step 5. Should the team finishing top decline promotion to Step 5 then they will be relegated to Step 7.

The clubs that finish second to fifth will contest a set of play-off matches. The club that finishes second will play at home to the club that finishes fifth and the club that finishes third will play at home to the club that finishes fourth. The winners of the two fixtures in each division will play another match on the ground of the team that finished highest during the season. The winners will be promoted to Step 5.

The teams finishing in the bottom three places in each of the Eastern Counties League Division One (North) and the Eastern Counties League Division One (South) will be liable to relegation to Step 7.

All clubs promoted or relegated within the National League System will be placed in an appropriate geographical division by the Leagues Committee of the Football Association.

## **CLUB GOVERNANCE**

### **Accounts**

All clubs must keep records of their financial transactions to disclose with reasonable accuracy, at any time, the financial position of the Club. These records must be retained by the Club for a minimum of six years.

Each year the Club must prepare a set of accounts which must include a profit and loss account and a balance sheet which should be verified by an independent, appropriately qualified accountant and approved by members at a General Meeting.

A copy of these accounts must be sent to League Secretary, Kevin Lorkins, within nine months of the accounting year end date.

### **Bank Account**

A bank account must be opened and maintained in the name of the Club. No sum should be drawn from the Club Account unless it is authorised by two of the designated signatories. All monies payable to the Club should be received by the Treasurer and deposited in the Club Account.

### **Ground Grading**

Clubs in the Division One (North) and Division One (South) need to hold Ground Grading Standard Step 6 whilst those in the Premier Division need Ground Grading Standard Step 5.

The principal differences between the standards are as follows:

Grade Step 6:

Covered accommodation for 100 spectators of which at least 50 must be seated in one stand.

Grade Step 5:

Covered accommodation for 200 spectators of which at least 100 must be seated in stands with a minimum capacity of 50.

### **Income Tax and National Insurance Contributions (RTI)**

All payments of salaries, wages, honoraria, and other remuneration shall be made through the Real Time Information (RTI) system set up with HMRC. All such payments shall be made by the Club from the Club Bank Account.

If your club pays anyone wages, then the club must be registered as an employer with HMRC and will be given a reference number by them to account for income tax and national insurance contributions.

Should your club be eligible for promotion to Step 4, and the Football Association find that your club has any players on contract they will check with HMRC to find out if the club has an employer tax reference number. If not, then your promotion will be denied.

Additionally, if payments are made to players by a third party, i.e. they do not appear in the Club's accounts and have not been paid through the RTI system, that Club will be regarded as seeking to gain an unfair advantage and may be denied promotion.

### **Pension**

If your club has an employer tax reference number, then you will be required to put in place arrangements to offer a contributory pension scheme to your employees. HMRC will notify you of the procedure to be followed if that is the case, but details can be found in the Pension Regulator's website at [www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk/en/employers](http://www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk/en/employers).

### **Security of Tenure**

Security of tenure of the ground is both a requirement of the League and the Football Association. This means that as of 31<sup>st</sup> March every year, a club must:

- a) own the freehold of the ground or
- b) have a lease of the ground which does not expire before the end of the next Playing Season or
- c) possess a written agreement for the use of the ground which is acceptable to The Football Association and the League.

This includes ground sharing agreements which are governed by strict rules. Advice and assistance are available from the League where ground sharing is proposed.

If in any doubt at all about the status of tenure of your ground, again advice and assistance are freely available from the League.

## **VAT**

An organization is required to register for VAT if the taxable income exceeds £85,000 per annum. If so registered, then all gate receipts are deemed to be subject to VAT.

## **Misconduct**

The Management Committee members agreed that, in addition to the matters being dealt with by County FAs via the disciplinary process, the League may follow up serious instances of misconduct. If the situation warrants it, officers of an offending club could be called to come before the Management Committee or a Sub-Group of the Committee to discuss the behaviour of their members and/or spectators. If the League is not satisfied with their explanation and/or course of actions they have taken, the League may impose sanctions against the club.

Club officials may wish to review their arrangements for stewards in relation to match officials and remind their members and/or spectators of the consequences of unacceptable behaviour.

## **FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION COMPETITIONS**

The Football Association has two competitions available to our clubs. These are the FA Cup and the FA Vase.

Places in the FA Cup are currently restricted to those clubs playing in the Premier Division. In addition, qualifying clubs must have the appropriate ground standard and pitch size required and be a bone fide first team and have played in the FA Vase in the preceding season.

Entry into the FA Vase is restricted to clubs in both our divisions who have the appropriate ground grading and pitch size.

Applications for entry are required to be made to the Football Association by 1<sup>st</sup> April, and a reminder will be sent to all clubs in advance of this date.

## **KEEP IT DOWN FOR THE KIDS**

The League runs an ongoing campaign to reduce the amount and volume of foul language at our grounds under the "Keep it Down for the Kids" banner.

Clubs are asked to support the campaign, which has the full backing of the League's sponsors, by taking their own steps to monitor and reduce foul language on their ground and by using and displaying the items issued by the League to publicise the campaign. These items include bibs for the technical area and posters for the dressing rooms and clubhouse.

Clubs are reminded that it is a policy of the League that the bibs provided by the League which bear the "Keep it Down" logo and the sponsor's name, should be worn in the technical area and when 'warming up'. If the League is notified of a breach of this policy, a club may be charged.

## **LEAGUE CHALLENGE CUP COMPETITION**

Entry into the League Challenge Cup is optional.

All matches in the cup must be decided on the night. If the result is a draw after ninety minutes, there is no extra time to be played, and the match moves immediately into penalty kicks.

No player can play for more than one club in a season in the League Challenge Cup. Any player taking part in an abandoned match shall have that appearance count as having played for that club. Any misconduct relating to abandoned matches comes under the appropriate CFA.

## **MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

The Management Committee of the League consists of two representatives from clubs in each of the Premier Division, Division One (North) and Division One (South). The members are supported by the officers of the League.

The current club representatives are as follows:

Derek Oakey	Ely City
Mary Ablett	Woodbridge Town
Bev Dorling	Needham Market
Jimmy Flanagan	Barkingside

Meetings of the Management Committee are held six times each year, usually as follows:

Last Sunday in September	Last Sunday in November
First Sunday in February	First Sunday in April
Third Sunday in May	Prior to the AGM

Meetings are all held at Diss Town Football Club at 10:00 a.m. apart from the meeting prior to the AGM which is held at noon.

## OFFICERS

The officers of the League dealing with the Eastern Counties League are:

Officer	Name	Email address
Chairman	Peter Hutchings	<a href="mailto:chairman@thurlownunnleague.co.uk">chairman@thurlownunnleague.co.uk</a>
Secretary	Kevin Lorkins	<a href="mailto:secretary@thurlownunnleague.co.uk">secretary@thurlownunnleague.co.uk</a>
Fixtures *	David Mayes	<a href="mailto:davidfix@btinternet.com">davidfix@btinternet.com</a>
Fixtures **	Chris Rose	<a href="mailto:Christopher.rose@openreach.co.uk">Christopher.rose@openreach.co.uk</a>
Registrations	Phil Pemberton	<a href="mailto:Registrations@thurlownunnleague.co.uk">Registrations@thurlownunnleague.co.uk</a>
Ground standards	Peter Hutchings	<a href="mailto:chairman@thurlownunnleague.co.uk">chairman@thurlownunnleague.co.uk</a>
IT	Heather Trevers	<a href="mailto:heather.trevers@btinternet.com">heather.trevers@btinternet.com</a>
Match official administration	Heather Trevers	<a href="mailto:heather.trevers@btinternet.com">heather.trevers@btinternet.com</a>
Match Official Appointments ^	John Tythcott	<a href="mailto:johntythcott@hotmail.com">johntythcott@hotmail.com</a>
Match Official Appointments ^^	Brian Chapman	<a href="mailto:bchapman074@gmail.com">bchapman074@gmail.com</a>

\* Premier Division, Division One (North), Under 23 Leagues, League Challenge Cup and Chell Trophy.

\*\* Division One (South)

^ Premier Division, Division One (North), Division One (South) and League Challenge Cup.

^^ Under 23 League, Chell Trophy and Youth League.

## MEDICAL EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN ("MEAP")

Clubs are required to prepare and maintain a MEAP to assist the club to deal with incidents both on and off the pitch in a safe, structured, and timely manner.

Additionally, clubs are reminded that it is a requirement under Standardised Rule 25.1 that "Each Club shall have at least one First Aider who has a valid Emergency First Aid in Football (EFAiF) qualification."

Clubs are further reminded that Standardised Rule 8.18 requires that "All Clubs at Steps 1 to 6 are required to have a working and serviced defibrillator available at all home matches".

## **RULE BREACHES**

Where a club is charged with a breach of the Competition Rules, a formal notice will be sent to the club secretary by the charging League officer. The club will be given seven days to respond to the charge and has the option of requesting a personal hearing or submitting mitigation.

Cases will be heard regularly either at the next available Management Committee Meeting or at online meetings. Personal hearings will take place at the next Management Committee Meeting unless the nature of the offence is so serious or urgent to warrant the arrangement of a separate hearing.

The outcome in a case will be notified to the club secretary by Kevin Lorkins within seven days of the Management Committee Meeting hearing the case. Any fine levied by the competition must be paid within twenty-eight days of receiving notification of the fine.

## **REGIONAL CLUB MEETINGS**

There will be four Regional Club Meetings held on Monday evenings in March where clubs are required to attend, and any business can be discussed. The meetings will be held in Cambridgeshire, Essex, Norfolk, and Suffolk.

## **PLAYER REGISTRATIONS**

### **Before the start of the season.**

For senior teams; each Club must have at least sixteen (16) Players registered fourteen (14) days before the start of the Playing Season.

For youth teams; each Club must have eleven (11) Players registered seven (7) days before the start of each Playing Season.

The date for the start of the season will be decided by the League Management committee; clubs will be advised at the AGM.

### **During the season**

Once the season has commenced a player must be registered with the club at least four hours prior to kick-off via the Whole Game System.

The League recommends that clubs use the online consent process through the whole game system.

If a club uses the 'offline consent' through the whole game system, they must ensure that the player has signed a hard copy of the registration form before submitting the

request through the club's portal. The registration form can be downloaded from the league's website.

The league can request a copy of the registration form at any time. Failure to provide the form will result in the registration being invalid.

### **Transfers**

For a transfer to be processed, clubs must prove that they have correctly approached the club that the player is currently registered with.

The League will accept two methods of approach, only.

- A completed transfer form emailed to the registration secretary  
The form can be found on the League's website.  
[www.thurlownunnleague.com](http://www.thurlownunnleague.com)

OR

- Email exchange between the two clubs.

The approaching club must forward a copy of the email that was sent to the club holding the player's registration to the registration secretary.

The email exchange between the two clubs must have originated from the approaching club's registered email address for either the Chairman or the Secretary and the reply from the receiving club must be from the registered contact of the club on the HelpWithit system.

**Screenshots of emails, WhatsApp or text messages will not be accepted as proof of 'notice of approach'.**

If a player is being transferred the Notice of Approach process must be adhered to. The club will be required to confirm within the Whole Game System process that they understand the rules and procedures around the Notice of Approach.

Once the notice of approach has been completed the transfer should, at this point, be submitted through the Whole Game System.

### **Adding a Player to your Club**

Any players not already in the Competition Portal or Full-Time can be searched for and added directly into Portal using the FAN search function. Or by using the player's name and date of birth.

This allows club administrators to identify players easily and securely from across the national database.

Once the players have been found and attached, they can then be assigned to the appropriate team. At this stage, the process is complete, and the records are up to date and ready to be presented for League registration.

If you are unable to locate a player on the system, it is recommended that, rather than issue a new FAN, in the first instance clubs should contact their County FA for assistance as it is highly unlikely that, unless from overseas, a player is not already on the system.

### **Registration Deadline**

The final date for registering or transferring players in a season is by 5.00pm on 31st March.

Adult and Youth League player registration enquiries should go to:  
Phil Pemberton – registrations@thurlownunnleague.co.uk

## **STEP 4 LICENCE**

All clubs playing at Steps 1-4 of the football pyramid need to be licensed by their respective leagues to compete. This is a move by the FA to promote the sustainability and integrity of Non-league Football.

Clubs are assessed in various areas including legal entity, ownership, integrity, stadia, and finance in order to obtain the licence.

## **TROPHIES**

The League will present a trophy to the club finishing first in the Premier Division, Division One (North) and Division One (South), the winners of the play-off finals in each of those three divisions and to the winners in the Challenge Cup, along with eighteen trophies for the club's players. Should a club wish to purchase further player trophies these can be ordered direct from the supplier, details of which can be obtained from Kevin Lorkins.

The club receiving a trophy will be given a 'Trophy Agreement' which must be completed and authorised by three club officers/committee members and returned to Kevin Lorkins within fourteen days.

## **WITHDRAWAL**

Should your club wish to withdraw from the competition this can only be done without penalty at the end of the season but notice of withdrawal must be sent to Kevin Lorkins by 31<sup>st</sup> March.

The usual penalty issued for a withdrawal during the season or giving notice after 31<sup>st</sup> March is a fine of £2,000.

# GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION

## Eastern Counties Football League Data Protection Policy

### 1. **About this Policy**

- 1.1 A copy of this policy should be given (or made available) to all staff members, volunteers and others who come into contact with personal data during the course of their involvement with the Eastern Counties Football League.
- 1.2 The Eastern Counties Football League handles personal data about current, former, and on occasion prospective players [and their parents or guardians], employees, volunteers, committee members, members, referees, coaches, managers, contractors, third parties, suppliers, and any other individuals that we communicate with.
- 1.3 In your official capacity with the Eastern Counties Football League, you may process personal data on our behalf, and we will process personal data about you. We recognise the need to treat all personal data in an appropriate and lawful manner, in accordance with the EU General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679 (**GDPR**).
- 1.4 Correct and lawful treatment of this data will maintain confidence in the League and protect the rights of players and any other individuals associated with the League. This Policy sets out our data protection responsibilities and highlights the obligations of the League which means the obligations of our employees, committee, volunteers, members, and any other contractor or legal or natural individual or organisation acting for or on behalf of the League.
- 1.5 You are obliged to comply with this policy when processing personal data on behalf of the League and this policy will help you to understand how to handle personal data.
- 1.6 The League Officers and Committee will be responsible for ensuring compliance with this Policy. Any questions about this Policy or data protection concerns should be referred to the committee.
- 1.7 We process employee, volunteer, member, referee, coach, manager, contractor, committee, supplier, and third-party personal data for administrative and League management purposes. Our purpose for holding this personal data is to be able to contact relevant individuals on League business or administer the terms of your employment, and our legal basis for processing your personal data in this way is the contractual relationship we have with you. We will keep this data for twelve months after the end of your official relationship with the League unless required otherwise by law and / or regulatory requirements. If you do not provide your personal data for this purpose, you will not be able to carry out your role or the obligations of your contract with the League.

Further information and details can be found under the Information Section of the League website.

# **APPENDIX 1**

## **Postponement of Fixtures in Thurlow Nunn League Club Instructions for Season 2025/26**

Unless agreement is in place before the start of the season, Premier and First Division matches can only be postponed by the League or by the Match Official appointed to referee the match. As FA Standardised Rule 14.2 states, 'No Club shall postpone a Competition match on account of the apparent state of the ground'.

The League will use its discretion and postpone matches in extreme weather conditions, or because of some particular local circumstance, but generally it will be the appointed Match Referee who decides whether a pitch is fit for play.

If the Match Referee is unable to be present at a Pitch Inspection, then he/she can make a decision after consultation with the person carrying out the inspection. This should be a Referee of the same or higher level. If there is no other option a decision can be made remotely by the Match Referee if the Club can use a video call showing the state of the pitch.

Home Clubs must keep their opponents informed of any possible problems with their pitch and any impending pitch inspections. They should ensure that a decision is made before their opponents begin their journey.

Should a pitch be declared unfit for play then the home club should inform their opponents and email or text the appropriate League Fixture Secretary asap. There is no longer a need to complete a Pitch Inspection Form, but the Match Referee will be required to contact the League about any postponement decision.

In the event of a pitch inspection being carried out then a payment of travel expenses at current rate may be offered, paid by the Home Club. If the appointed Match Officials have reported to the ground, then they are entitled to their travel expenses plus half their match fee if the match is not played.