

# 2023/24 SEASON

ISSUED IN JULY 2023

Durham Women Football Club  
University Sports Park  
Maiden Castle, Stockton Road  
Durham, DH1 3SE

## PROFESSIONAL GAME ACADEMY

# HANDBOOK



# WELCOME

Welcome to the Durham Women FC Professional Game Academy. We are delighted to have you registered with our club for the coming season.

We want to develop players and ensure they reach their maximum potential, so that they have the best chance of representing their national team and playing in the top tiers of Women's Football. We have a great reputation of developing young players and giving them a chance. As you can see in the First Team squad, many players have developed through our pathway! The opportunities at the top end of the game are wide open for players to grab with hard work and commitment.

Football is a team game and we expect you all to work hard for each other. At Durham we play with pride and passion and everyone that wears our shirt is a representative of the club. We look forward to bringing all our teams together to build squads that can achieve the best results.

We hope this handbook provides you with some useful information on the season ahead. Should you have any questions that aren't answered in here please feel free to get in touch with us.

We look forward to working with you all over the coming season and seeing you develop both on and off the field.

# CONTENTS

- 4** Who's Who & Contact Details
- 6** Governance
- 7** Who Do I Go To?
- 8** Our Standards & What We Expect
- 9** Education / Player Voice
- 10** Wellbeing & Nutrition
- 11** Training Schedule
- 12** Communication
- 13** Match Day
- 14** How to find us
- 15** Commercial Partnerships
- 16** Player's Own Commercial Deals + Media/Interviews/Appearances
- 17** Training Kit
- 18** Match Day Kit
- 19** Player Agreement
- 20** Safeguarding Statement
- 21** Safeguarding Poster
- 22** How to access Club Policies

# WHO'S WHO

## Company Director / Head of Football

Lee Sanders  
lee.sanders@durhamwfc.co.uk  
07760331421



## Company Director / Head of Finance

Dawn Hepple  
dawn.hepple@durhamwfc.co.uk  
07792164781



## Operations & Marketing Manager

Mark Donnelly  
mark.donnelly@durhamwfc.co.uk  
07495 663334



## Academy Manager & Head Coach

Bob Wilkinson  
Bob.wilkinson@durhamwfc.co.uk  
07496 153402



## Head of Goalkeeping

Stephen Brass  
stephen.brass@durhamwfc.co.uk  
07905828470



## Head of Medical

Nat Gutteridge  
Enat.gutteridge@durhamwfc.co.uk  
07572 458168



## Club Doctor

Dougal Southward  
dougal.southward@durhamwfc.co.uk



## Performance Lead

Simon Fairbairn  
simon.fairbairn@durhamwfc.co.uk  
07711780616



## Strength & Conditioning Coach

Kara Elderkin  
kara.elderkin@durhamwfc.co.uk  
07795272216



## Welfare & Safeguarding

Marc McPhillips  
marc.mcphillips@durhamwfc.co.uk  
07528552582



## Pathway Operations Manager

Louise Robinson  
Louise.Robinson@durhamwfc.co.uk  
07792757870



## Physiotherapist

Eleanor Connor  
eleanor.connor@durhamwfc.co.uk  
07540 302725



# WHO'S WHO

**Academy u21s Assistant Coach**

Sarah Robson  
Sarah.mcfadden09@gmail.com  
07731 307757

**Academy u16s Head Coach**

Callum Croft  
callum.croft@hotmail.com  
07415 690857

**Academy u16s Assistant Coach**

Lee Grace  
gracey1712@hotmail.co.uk  
07999 612793

**HR**

Nazia Aftab  
enquiries@npahumanresources.co.uk

**Club Psychologist**

David Charlton  
*Referrals to David can be accessed  
through Dawn Hepple & Marc McPhillips*



# GOVERNANCE

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dawn Hepple, Quentin Sloper, Lee Sanders, Jenna Keir Andrew (legal)

## HUMAN RESOURCES

Nazia Aftab

## CEO/HEAD OF FOOTBALL

Lee Sanders

## HEAD OF SAFEGUARDING

Marc McPhillips

## OPERATIONS MANAGER/MARKETING

Mark Donnelly

## HEAD COACH

Claire Ditchburn

## HEAD OF MEDICAL

Natalie Gutteridge

## ACADEMY MANAGER/HEAD COACH

Bob Wilkinson

## SAFETY OFFICER

Carl Broughton

## GOALKEEPING COACH

Stephen Brass

## CLUB DOCTOR

Dougal Southward

## ACADEMY OPERATIONS

Louise Robinson

## MATCH DAY STAFF/VOLUNTEERS

## SPORTS THERAPIST

Eleanor Connor

## ACADEMY ASSISTANT COACH

Sarah Robson

## 1st TEAM/ACADEMY S & C LEAD

Kara Elderkin

## SPORTS SCIENCE/LIFESTYLE LEAD

Simon Fairbairn

## 1st TEAM/ACADEMY PSYCHOLOGIST

David Charlton

## ACADEMY U16 HEAD COACH

Callum Croft

## ACADEMY U16 ASSISTANT COACH

Lee Grace

## ETC - FOUNDATION PHASE LEAD

Katy Hawkins

## ETC STAFF

U8 - U14

## ORGANISATIONAL CHART KEY

FULL TIME

PART TIME

# WHO DO I GO TO?

## **I'm going to be late for training or wish to request an absence**

You must contact your Head coach as soon as possible.  
Under 21s - Bob Wilkinson  
Under 16s - Callum Croft

## **I need to be seen by the physio, doctor or sports therapist**

Please contact Eleanor Connor.  
Please also ensure that you are registered with a local GP.

## **I've been asked to do an interview or player appearance**

Inform Mark Donnelly at the earliest possible opportunity, and ask the person who has contacted you to email him on [mark.donnelly@durhamwfc.co.uk](mailto:mark.donnelly@durhamwfc.co.uk)

# OUR STANDARDS

**'THE STANDARD YOU WALK PAST IS THE STANDARD YOU COME TO ACCEPT'**

We all have a responsibility to ensure that standards remain high on and off the field.

If you see something that falls below the standards we set, call it out in a respectful manner. Otherwise, that becomes the norm.

## What We Expect

- Keep our changing room and all other facilities clean, tidy and uncluttered - on the whole and in your individual space.
- No mobile phones at pitchside or in the gym.
- Do not leave empty or used bottles at the pitchside following sessions.
- Being on time for any team meetings, meals, training, or travel departures is non-negotiable.
- Speak to people how you would like to be spoken to.
- If a member of staff asks you to do something, please observe that. They all want what is best for you and the team.
- Leave changing rooms at away games as we find them.
- Collect all rubbish and leave the coach as we found it on away games.
- Attend all player appearances and undertake all media duties as requested.
- No alcohol within 72 hours of fixtures.

**Falling below these standards will result in fines.**



# EDUCATION

All players under 16 in our Academy must be in full time education. For those Post 16, they should be undertaking a course of study, an apprenticeship or work-based learning programme that is of their own choosing.

All players will have an Individual Development Plan (IDP) alongside an Educational Individual Development plan (EIDP). These will include: Feedback and development areas from the Head Coach, Strength and Conditioning Coach, Player Care Lead, Individual Educational Advisor, and where relevant Physiotherapist, Performance Analyst, Sports Psychologist and Safeguarding representative. All IDPs will be shared and discussed with the player (and, if under the age of 18. their parent / carer.

Regular reviews of these plans will occur throughout the season

# PLAYER VOICE

Each squad will nominate two players to form a Player Voice Group. This is so that staff can consider the thoughts and ideas from the players in Academy Development. Meetings will be held regularly throughout the season.

# WELLBEING & NUTRITION

Every player should be aware of their wellbeing and how they are feeling physically and emotionally. Any issues must be reported to an appropriate member of staff as soon as possible so that adjustments / referrals can be made.

**This includes during Academy breaks or if you are away on International duty.**

## Nutritional Support

During the season nutritional support will be offered. There will be access to a nutrition provider so any further products can be purchased individually, the links to these will be shared with all players.

Nutritional education will be provided through the season with an aim to improve the choices made away from the training ground and matches.

There is an expectation that away from training there is a professional approach to managing lifestyle, this includes sleep, physical activity, and recovery strategies.

The support will be individualised throughout the season.

There will be individual progress meetings held with all players - these are supportive meetings to identify strengths and areas of improvement.

# TRAINING

Your standard weekly training schedule will be issued to you at the start of the 2023/24 season. Any changes or additions to this will be shared via the WhatsApp group at the earliest opportunity.

## **Academy U21**

Tuesday (MC) 4-5 GYM / 5-7pm PITCH  
Wednesday Match Day  
Friday (MC) 1-2.30pm PITCH, 2.30-3.30pm Gym

## **Academy U16**

Tuesday (MC) 4.30-5.15pm LIFESTYLE / 5.15-6pm GYM / 6-7 PITCH  
Thursday Gym 5-6pm / 6-7pm Pitch  
Saturday Match Day

**All times given are session start times - you are expected to be on the pitch/in the gym/in the meeting and ready to participate at this time.**

# COMMUNICATION

All day-to-day communication will take place through WhatsApp.

Please only contact staff through WhatsApp and/or text message, rather than through any social media sites.

There should only be three WhatsApp groups in operation, which are:

**TEAM GROUP (PLAYERS & STAFF)**

**PLAYERS ONLY GROUP**

**STAFF ONLY GROUP**

We ask that any further groups be shut down/not started.

This will streamline communication and ensure all messages are clear and transparent for everyone in the team.

From time-to-time, you may also be contacted via email should you need to be sent any documents from the club.

The above does not include private messages that will from time to time be required on a one-to-one basis between a staff member and player.

# FIXTURE DETAILS

## HOME FIXTURES

### ARRIVAL

Players must report no later than 90 minutes before kick-off, and report to the home dressing room.

If you require strapping/physio, please arrive earlier than this.

Occasionally you may be required to report earlier to support community engagement activities. This will be communicated in the week prior. Any amendments to the match day schedule will be communicated via WhatsApp.

## AWAY FIXTURES

### TRAVEL

Details for travelling to away fixtures will be communicated to players in the week prior to the fixture.

**If you are not travelling on the team coach - or require a pick-up at anywhere other than Maiden Castle - you must inform the Head Coach by no later than 48 hours before departure.**

# HOW TO FIND US

## BY CAR

### **TRAINING / MATCH DAY- Maiden Castle**

Address for SatNav is - The Graham Sports Centre, Stockton Road, Maiden Castle, Durham, DH1 3SE

### **MATCH DAY- New Ferens Park**

Address for SatNav is - New Ferens Park, Belmont Business Park, Durham, DH1 1GG

### **MATCH DAY- The Racecourse Ground**

Address for SatNav is - The Racecourse, Green Lane, Durham, DH1 3BN

## BY TRAIN / BUS

### **TRAIN - The closest train station to these grounds is DURHAM**

- 1.7 Miles from Maiden Castle. On main bus route (42)
- 2.4 Miles from New Ferens Park. On main bus route (64)
- 1.1 Miles from The Racecourse. On main bus route (40)

# KIT & COMMERCIAL

The club have a number of key commercial partnerships which contain a number of obligations that players must abide to.

## Teamwear Partner - Nike

- **Nike** are our Teamwear Partner.
- At all times when training, travelling or on match days, players must be wearing Nike kit - inclusive of socks. The only exception is grip socks, but these must contain no obvious logos of Nike's competitors.
- **You must only wear the Nike kit which is given to you by the club - not Nike kit that you may already possess.**

## Hydration Partner - iPRO

- **iPRO** are our Hydration Partner.
- At all times when training or at match days, players must only drink iPro products or from iPro bottles.
- If you bring your own water bottle - even if it is unbranded - it must be emptied into an iPro bottle for when training or at fixtures.
- No other bottles - whether branded or unbranded - will be allowed in the changing rooms or on the pitch at home or away fixtures or training.
- 

## Nutrition Partner - NutritionX

- **NutritionX** are our Nutrition Partner.

# PLAYER'S COMMERCIAL DEALS MEDIA/INTERVIEWS/APPEARANCES

## Player's Own Commercial Deals

- Players are welcome to form their own commercial deals with other companies.
  - **However, you must be given permission by the Head of Football and Operations & Marketing Manager in order to:**
    - Promote a brand or product when wearing Durham Women FC kit
    - Promote a brand or product when at Durham Women FC training or fixtures
    - Use the club badge or any imagery/video content (e.g. from fixtures of training) relating to the club to promote the brand or product
- Players cannot use the club badge, kit or facilities to promote any product that conflicts with our Commercial Agreements detailed on the previous page.**

## Media / Interviews/ Appearances

Throughout the season, you may be asked to complete interviews, media work and player appearances.

These will always be arranged to ensure there is minimal disruption to your training and match preparation time.

**If players are approached directly to conduct an interview or to undertake a player appearance, please tell the person contacting you to email Mark Donnelly on [mark.donnelly@durhamwfc.co.uk](mailto:mark.donnelly@durhamwfc.co.uk).**

This is so the club can keep track of all interviews and appearances being undertaken, ensuring we can support you fully in them.



# TRAINING KIT

**Please only wear club provided kit at training.**



Training  
Shirt



Training  
Shorts



Training  
Pants



1/4 Zip  
Top



Black  
Jacket

**Should players leave the club, they will need to return ALL kit.**

# MATCH DAY KIT

## First Choice / Home Kit



**GK**



## Second Choice / Away Kit



**GK**



## Third Choice GK



# PLAYER AGREEMENT

## PLAYERS SHOULD:

- Adhere to the 'RESPECT' code of conduct ([www.thefa.com/respect](http://www.thefa.com/respect))
- Behave in a positive, professional manner at all times throughout their engagement with Durham WFC
- Endeavor to lead a healthy, active lifestyle outside of Durham WFC. Follow a lifestyle appropriate to development
- Ensure that you achieve a high level of fitness and maintain / improve these while with Durham WFC.
- Report all injuries to the appropriate figure at the club
- Only wear club issued kit to training and match days (unless otherwise agreed)

# SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

Durham Women Football Club and all its staff, players and volunteers are fully committed to the safeguarding and welfare of children, young people, young players, vulnerable adults and vulnerable groups. The Safeguarding and welfare of those associated with the club is of paramount importance to the management team and staff.

- All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to safety and protection from abuse and harm.
- Processes are in place for the protection of vulnerable groups from radicalisation.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- All staff, players and volunteers working for Durham Women Football Club have a responsibility to report concerns to the Club Head of Safeguarding and Designated Safeguarding Officers.
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Our Safeguarding Policies can be accessed at <https://durhamwfc.co.uk/club-policies-documents/>



# SAFE

**Are you being heard?**

**Is something worrying you?**

**Do you need someone to listen?**

If you are worried or concerned about yourself or someone you know, you can talk to us in confidence.



**Designated Safeguarding and Player Welfare Officer**

**Name: Marc McPhillips**

**Contact: 07528 552582 or [marc.mcphillips@durhamwfc.co.uk](mailto:marc.mcphillips@durhamwfc.co.uk)**

**Respect**



Any concerns please contact your clubs welfare officer or  
contact NSPCC: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)  
Tel: 0808 800 5000

# HOW TO ACCESS CLUB POLICIES

Club Policies can be accessed via our secure First Team Intranet.

Follow the steps below to access these policies:

1. Visit [durhamwfc.co.uk/first-team-intranet/](https://durhamwfc.co.uk/first-team-intranet/)

2. Enter the password - **maidencastle123**

3. All club policies can then be viewed.

A full list of policies available via this link is below:

- Club Anti-Doping Policy & Whereabouts Information
- Club Equality & Diversity Policy
- Club Equal Opportunities Policy
- Club Risk Management Policy
- Club Social Media Policy
- Club Maternity & Paternity Policy
- Club Safeguarding Policy
- Club Privacy Policy
- Club Recruitment Policy
- Club Safeguarding Statement of Commitment
- FA Betting Rules
- FA Anti-Doping Guidelines & Regulations
- Club Complaints Policy