

*Bonar Bridge Football Club Annual Report  
July 2023 - June 2024*



*Creating togetherness, building  
dreams & raising aspiration  
A Grassroots community football Club  
with BIG dreams*

Registered SCIO SC050022

## *Our Story*

Bonar Bridge Football Club (BBFC) was originally founded in 1968. Registered as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) in 2019, the club is managed by a dedicated voluntary board of trustees with assistance from community volunteers.

The original club ceased in 2010 after 35 years of participating in the North Caledonian league. Providing the villages of the Kyle of Sutherland with a much-loved team to participate in, support, develop friendships and create valuable memories the club's cessation left a void for our remote rural communities.

In 2018 the club was reformed by a group of volunteers with a vision to create a holistic sporting and social opportunity for our communities, that would support all ages and abilities with clear development paths and long-term sustainability as a youth, league club, and community resource.

BBFC is more than just football; health, citizenship and community development are at the core of our aims. Keeping football inclusive and accessible at a local level.

We hope you enjoy reading this snapshot of the past year.

The Club is based at the Migdale Park playing fields and supports remote rural communities to have football access either as a player, volunteer, or supporter.



# *Our Facilities*

## *Migdale Playing Field*



Our Home ground is Migdale Playing Fields, a fantastic setting with views over the Kyle of Sutherland and to the mountains beyond. The playing field is currently owned by the Highland Council however, the club has requested a 25-year lease in order that we can maintain the site and make improvements that will benefit the whole community. To date this has been a lengthy process which we hope will be concluded this year and we can then move forward with our exciting plans. To help us with our winter training we were delighted to secure funding from Creich and Ardgay & District Community Councils Beinn Tharsuinn fund for portable flood lights. This has made a huge difference to training opportunities and the clubs health & safety.

## *The Clubhouse*

Our clubhouse was completely refurbished in 2022. The effects of the refurbishments have been far reaching, the community has a protected asset saved from falling into disrepair. The club is able to offer appropriate facilities that support health and wellbeing in a safe and comfortable environment, and it has enhanced the feeling of community spirit, club identity and increased involvement in the running of the club, it has been a real boost. Visiting teams always comment on the quality of our clubhouse and the service provided to them by the club volunteers.



## *Car parking*

Improvements were made to our car park this season. With the increasing number of members at all clubs no lighting in the car park was a serious health & safety risk. With funding from the SSE Achany and Foundation Scotland's Eon Rosehall windfarms we were able to install street column lighting. This has made not just a difference to the safety of our members but has also been a boost to the volunteers and committee who worked hard to raise the funds and oversee the management of the project. Additionally with a grant from SSE Loch Budhie we were able to address the drainage issues in the car park and the total area was resurfaced making it a better space for the club and community 😊

Looking ahead our next plan for this area is the installation of a barrier between the car park and field with emergency vehicle access and controlled pedestrian access further increasing the safe access to and from the car park and playing field.



## Our Clubs

### Junior Club

The Junior club is for ages 5 -11 and has a focus on football for fun that is inclusive and accessible. The club meets every Friday evening during term time and is facilitated by fifteen dedicated volunteer coaches. The club brings together children from all areas of the Kyle of Sutherland and our outlying neighbours assisting in the development of cohesion and the formation of friendships between children who attend one of the five small schools in the area. This also benefits the transition of primary children to secondary where friendships have already been formed.

To date the club has decided to remain unaffiliated to a junior league which removes the many barriers to participation competitive football places on families and children who for various reasons would be unable to commit to a competitive endeavour. We do arrange friendly games against other clubs, attend football festivals and annually organise the clubs Kyle Cup tournament.



Lochbroom our P4/7 Kyle Cup winners 🏆👏



## Teams from across the Northern Highlands attend the Kyle cup.

In the school summer holidays with thanks to funding from SSG Groundworks we were delighted to be able to offer a football summer camp to 25 junior members. Three days of football fun provided by the excellent Ness Academy. Our junior squad attended the morning session which was enjoyed by all and provided an opportunity to meet up with their club mates.



In addition to club training, we have participated in a few friendlies and tournaments which provide our members with an opportunity to engage in a competitive game. Team spirits are always high, and the members do the club proud at all external events.



## *Brora Carnival week*



At tomorrow's training Carrie and Sheila will be taking a list of the kids who wish to be registered to play in the Inverness McDonalds Fun Football events. These are pop up events for us and we will let you know dates ahead of time.

If your child (P1-7) would like to be involved then can you pop us a message or come and register them before training please?

We are also looking for more volunteers to support us at these events, if you're willing and also happy to go through a disclosure, please get in touch!



## *Secondary*



Our secondary squad training takes place every Tuesday evening. This group has created a clear pathway from junior to secondary to senior, this year we have five secondary members also moving forward to participate in the senior training next season.

Engaging with young people is at the heart of the BBFC. Providing young people with clear pathways to continue in sport and fitness has clear links to their continued engagement with sport as adults. At a time when young people are developing into young adults the club is assisting them into understanding citizenship, good health & well-being, and providing them with transferable skills. We continue to be members of Youth Highland who provide us with support, guidance, and a youth network.

Our secondary members were also provided with free, three-day access to the Ness Academy summer football with 3 days of afternoon training and football fun.







BBFC is very much a community club and where possible we support the endeavours of football participation outside of our immediate location, this can be participating in football festivals or through pop up training which our secondary members assist in the session.

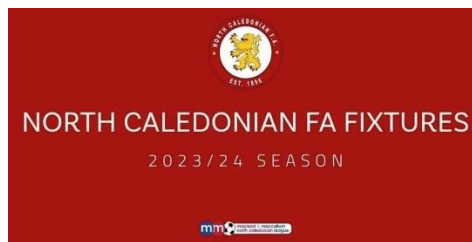
Yesterday evening a few of our coaches took a trip up to Kinlochbervie for a pop up training session for P1-7.

It was a great evening with an excellent turn out. Especially by the midgies who came out to see us in force 😄 scroll to the last picture to see some of the kids inventive midgie protection!

Huge thanks to North West Sutherland Schools Group for having us!



## Senior Club



The Senior team compete in the North Caledonian league with 26 fixtures played this year and have enjoyed several wins and some very close calls. Training takes place on a Thursday evening led by coaches Bobbie Breen, Tommy McClenaghan and Robbie Breen who took over as Senior club coaches this season.

It was the clubs most competitive season in the North Caledonian League since being resurrected in 2019. The committee are pleased that The Breens and Tommy will continue as the management team into the 2024-25 season. Additionally, the club is pleased with the retention of the bulk of our young squad who work hard and continually improve season after season.

 Northern Times  
20 Aug 2023 · 🌐

Bonar Bridge pick up first win of North Caley season




This year we asked for a volunteer senior club photographer and up stepped Gordon Sparling capturing fantastic football moments for the club. We are so grateful to have an amazing catalogue of the games that adds to our promotion of the club, match reports and community communication. Thank you Gordon 😊





**MAN OF THE MATCH**



Archie Ryder




**MAN OF THE MATCH**



Connor Ross




**MAN OF THE MATCH**



Liam Creighton




## *Senior Players Awards of the Season*

*Aiden Stainke Managers Player of the Year*



*Dave Macgruer Players Player of the Year & Supporters Payer of the Year*



*Alex Mackenzie Young Player of the Year & Top Goal scorer*



The link between our senior team and the secondary squad is important to the club and enhanced by opportunities such as the secondary squad helping the senior team with their pre match warmups and supporting the team at home and away matches, often creating team songs to cheer them on. Home matches continue to draw a good crowd and there is a great community feel at the games where people young and old come along to support their local team in all weathers.



*Secondary members support their senior team.*



*Players & supporters away bus*

# *Club Developments, Community & Fundraising*

## *New club kits*

This year was the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the opening of the current Bonar Bridge. To celebrate this commemorative moment with funding received from Creich Community Councils Coire Na Chloiche fund we were able to provide all junior and secondary members with a full new kit. The bridge was incorporated into the design making this a unique shirt. The Senior club kits were provided by club sponsors Monitra. All members have taken great pride in the club shirts with many supporters purchasing their own 😊





## Club Fundraising

### *The annual sponsored dribble*



*Our Sponsored dribble and Christmas raffle supported by so many local & further afield businesses, residents and members are vital fundraisers for the club*





*The club supports a boot donation scheme to ensure everyone who wants to join in has the opportunity to do so.*



*The club welcomes and supports volunteers to be involved with the club either on a regular basis or more ad hoc*



*The presence of the club at the playing fields has also encouraged the wider community to look after it and we are pleased to report that there is a notable change in the cleanliness of the site 😊*



We have also raised funds through sponsorship boards located at the perimeter of the playing field. Local businesses and those further afield have been delighted to support BBFC and its growth into a key community football club.



*The club is gaining an increasing profile in the football and wider community putting the club and the area on the map. This year we have featured in several news articles and even on BBC's A View From The terrace 😊*

 **Bonar Bridge F.C**  
20 Oct 2023 · 🌐

BBC release on [Bonar Bridge F.C](#) being shown tonight at 2230 on BBC Scotland 🟢🟡



 **Bonar Bridge F.C**  
14 Dec 2023 · 🌐



pressandjournal.co.uk  
**WATCH: Manchester United coach Benni McCarthy sends message of support to Bonar Bridge**



## *Future Plans*

The club remains in dialogue with the Highland Council pertaining to a 25-year lease of Migdale Park this has been a lengthy process and our application is still being considered. If successful we will then embark on a programme to remedy the issues of poor drainage, pitch quality, lighting, and other resources to make this a fit for purpose community recreational area.



## *Finance*

The club currently achieves a small income through player donations and small sponsorship from businesses. Financially the Football club is stable and meeting statutory financial obligations. The club is continuously fundraising to enhance the facility, member, and spectator experience and for the benefit of the whole community.

## *Our Funders*

Thank you for your support, encouragement, and belief 😊 for travelling this journey with us and for supporting so many people to be active, together and included in this remote rural location.



*Beinn Thaurisinn windfarm Creich cc Ardgay cc*



*Coire na Cloiche*



## *Committee*

Nene Maclean (Chair), Kenny Macnab (Vice Chair), Carrie Veters (Secretary), Gavin Ryder (Treasurer) Anne Marie Brannen (Child Protection)

Scott Veters, Ryan Maclean, Doris Calder, Aldi Calder, Michael Baird, Gail Munro, Irene Macnab, Sammy Allen, Amy Maclean, Sheila Lall, Steven Christie.

## *Coaches*

Tommy McClenaghan, Bobby Breen, Robbie Breen, Sammy Allen, Steven Christie, Nene Maclean, Amy Maclean, Irene Macnab, Kenny Macnab, Carrie Veters, Elissa Steven, Keith Sutherland, Andrew Murray, Scott Veters, Gavin Ryder, Tommy Agnew

## *Volunteers*

Kay Morrison, Grant Morrison, Archie Ryder, Hayley Bangs, Keith Williams, Gordon Sparling.

## *Chairs Message*

*This year we have seen progress made on the park with a much-improved competitive side and we aim to build on that in the coming season, we have had Gordon Sparling at our home games taking match photos which has been fantastic, some games have seen a nice size of crowd and makes good for an entertaining and sociable afternoon for all,*

*The Juniors are doing well in training and very well in their school teams so hopefully what there learning is helping with that, we are very fortunate to have secured funding for Ness Academy again this year.*

*We have been busy off the park also with some drainage works been carried out and in return should help with more home games been played at Migdale Park, also we upgraded the running surface of the car park and installed some streetlights to make things safer for the children in the darker nights at Training.*

*All of which wouldn't be possible with out the work from the committee, so I thank them all for their efforts and also a big thank you to all our sponsors for their continued support without both we wouldn't manage as a club.*

*Thank You*

*Nene Maclean*

**Chair**