

# THE SUFFOLK FA YOUTH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER



July and August Edition 2024

## **WAYS TO CONNECT WITH THE YOUTH COUNCIL:**

**X – SuffolkFA\_YC**

**Email -**

[Suffolkfayouthcouncil@gmail.com](mailto:Suffolkfayouthcouncil@gmail.com)

**Instagram -**

Suffolkfayouthcouncil

**TikTok –**

Suffolkfa.yc

**Follow the Youth council to hear about all our exciting events and updates!**

## **WHO WE ARE**

The Suffolk FA Youth Council are a team of young people aged between 16-25 made up of individuals from all different roles within football from across the county who are the voice of the Youth within Suffolk. The Suffolk FA Youth Council is provided with the autonomy to come up with their own ideas and suggestions to make a difference within the county. The Youth Council are here to support and give everyone the opportunity to make a difference and be heard, as we recognise that everyone has something meaningful to say.

## **INTRODUCTION TO YOUR YOUTH COUNCIL**

### **Meet Charlie – Youth Council Coaches Lead**

I am proper excited about my new role of Coaching Lead within the Suffolk FA Youth Council. My goal is to support coaches' growth and young players' development by providing tools and guidance for other young and keen

managers. I look forward to leading new projects to advance football coaching in Suffolk and collaborating with Council members, coaches, and stakeholders. By promoting continuous learning, I aim to enhance the overall football experience for Youth players within Suffolk and surrounding areas.

If you see a Youth Council member – don't be afraid to speak to us, we would love to hear everyone's suggestions.



## **YOUTH AND GRASSROOTS HEROES FEATURE**

The Youth Council would love to know about your Youth heroes. We are always looking to recognise people who are making a difference and we want to use these stories. If your club has Youth heroes that need recognising send them to our new email address [suffolkfayouthcouncil@gmail.com](mailto:suffolkfayouthcouncil@gmail.com) , let us know about them as we want to know and show them the recognition that they deserve.



As a Youth Council we have identified James Mant as our Youth and Grassroots Hero for July. James is the Academy Head Coach at Needham Market FC. Needham are a National League North side, in Suffolk, which has an incredible Youth set-up which allows young people to fulfil their potential in football.

The Academy operates an elite football excellence and education programme aimed at 16-19-year-olds with a passion for sport, combining academics in partnership with SCL Education and football provision to provide students with an excellent stepping stone to pursue a career in sport, football, sports coaching, physical education, physiotherapy or sports development.

We spoke to James about the work he does with Needham Market and here is what he had to say.

"My role as Academy Manager at Needham Market FC is to ensure that the club operates a complete Youth development pathway which provides local young footballers with the opportunity to develop as young people and as young footballers in an enjoyable learning environment.

The first stage of the pathway is where local players aged 12 to 16 learn about the on and off pitch behaviours required of a Needham Market player in an Eastern Junior Alliance league with a training session and game each week. After this stage we offer the opportunity for players to go into further education (16+) on site at the football club - where players can complete the equivalent to 3 A-Levels in sport & exercise science, with the opportunity of completing an additional A-Level online. This further education runs alongside a full-time football programme where players then get the opportunity to train three times a week with games and fitness plans included.

When players reach the end of this journey at the age of 18 - we then look to try and help them find their next steps in football. This could be into our first team - where we currently have around 40% academy graduates making up the first team squad. Or it could be into other Suffolk-based teams who play at a slightly lower level. It's really important to understand that not everyone will play in our first team, and that we have a duty of care to try and find everyone a team which is right for them beyond their time with us. We also put high emphasis on ensuring that we do everything that we can to help our players go into employment, university or other next steps beyond their time with us. We want to give everyone the best opportunities and support towards their future career so that they can reach their full potential in both football and life."

Thanks to James' work young people at the Academy are able to fulfil their potential and develop their skills within the sporting industry, diversifying their skills to physiotherapy, coaching or sporting psychology. This platform that James and his team work so hard to maintain has helped many young people find their career within football and sport. Thank you, James!



## EVENTS

At the end of the season, the Youth Council were present at the Suffolk FA annual Grassroots Festival supporting the delivery of the festival over the course of the two days. The Youth Council spent some time talking to players, coaches and participants, gaining an understanding of how young people are feeling and what we can do to support and aid the development of Youth football in Suffolk. The Youth Council also launched their first ever competition for the duration of the festival, which saw many teams across the county producing videos including why they love football and their best team celebrations. The Youth Council have set up communities for young coaches and referees to connect and seek support from.

The Youth Council are currently recruiting new members for the 2024-25 season. If you or someone you know is interested in becoming a member of the Youth Council then visit the Suffolk FA website for information on how to apply.

The new footballing season is almost upon us. Here are some dates for the diary and the coming season:

- 18<sup>th</sup> August 2024 – Eastern Region Women's Football League
- 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2024 – Thurlow Nunn Youth Football League starts.
- 7<sup>th</sup> September 2024 – Suffolk Youth Football League starts.
- 8<sup>th</sup> September 2024 – Suffolk Girls and Women's Football League starts.
- 28<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> September – The FA's Play Safe Weekend.
- The Ipswich & Suffolk Youth Football League and Eastern Junior Alliance league will also start soon with fixtures still to be announced.

The Youth Council are very excited to be able to work with everyone across the county to improve and shape the game. As well as these projects the Youth Council are currently continuing to work on more projects to support and make a difference within the county, keep an eye on this space!

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## HAVE YOUR SAY

The Youth Council love to hear from the Youth involved in today's game. Any support, ideas and suggestions that we receive help us to make a difference. Have your say and support the Youth Council:

[Suggestions Form](#)



[Youth Voice Survey](#)

