

Bucks Free Press

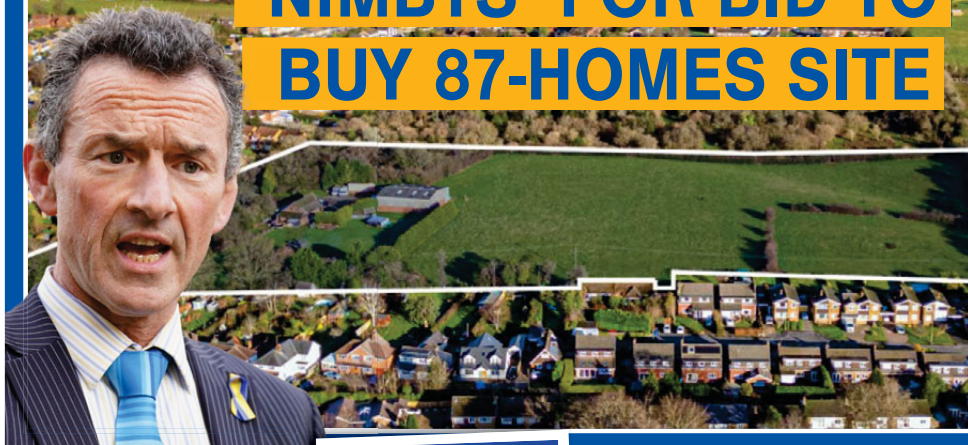
Friday, February 7, 2025

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ARREST OVER 'GUN' IN STREET



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PERSON IS STABBED IN FRACAS: P2



WIN £100

SPORTS DIRECT

SHOPPING VOUCHER: P14



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BIRTHDAY SHIRT FOR EX-PLAYER

Injury bills cost council £200k

Claims paid over potholes and paths

By Charlie Smith

INJURY claims have cost Buckinghamshire Council more than £200,000 since 2020, new figures show.

The unitary authority paid out for 431 of the 5,207 claims for accidents it received in total during this period.

Compensation in the 2024 calendar year amounted to £18,034.68, while in

2023 they totalled £117,626.41.

The other three years saw similar compensation totals, with £22,670.96 in 2022, £32,003.83 in 2021 and £14,827.93 in 2020.

The council said it logged injury claims according to where incidents took place, such as on roads, along paths or verges or inside premises.

Full story: Page 2



Library image: Getty Images

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News

Wanderers send shirt to lifelong fan for his 100th

Elizabeth Scott

elizabeth.scott@newsquest.co.uk

A lifelong Wycombe Wanderers fan celebrated his 100th birthday with a special surprise from the club.

Richard McQueen, a resident at Surrey Heights Dementia Care Centre, was honoured by Wycombe Wanderers with a personalised football shirt, displaying 'McQueen 100', and a special birthday card.

Mr McQueen's love for the club spans several generations, with his father, James Albert McQueen, being a renowned goalkeeper for top European clubs.

The McQueen family moved to High Wycombe, further cementing their ties to the Buckinghamshire football scene.

The Wycombe Wanderers Ex-Players Association uncovered more of Mr McQueen's sporting legacy, revealing a rich family history in both football and cricket.

Records show that Mr McQueen's brother, Brian McQueen, played five games for Wycombe reserves during the 1947/48 season and was also a notable cricketer for High Wycombe Cricket Club.

Mr McQueen himself represented Wycombe Wanderers reserves in November 1947.

At 100 years old, he is thought to be the oldest living Wycombe Wanderers player.

Despite his dementia diagnosis, Mr McQueen's passion for Wycombe Wanderers remains strong.

He often asks the care home team to put matches on TV and shares his footballing memories with fellow residents and team members.

Karen Roberts, wellbeing coordinator at Surrey Heights, said: "It's been an absolute pleasure to see Richard's passion for football recognised in such a special way.



Lifelong Wycombe Wanderers fan celebrates 100th birthday with special surprise. Image: Surrey Heights Dementia Care Centre

"Football has always been at the heart of Richard's life, and this surprise has brought him and his family so much joy."

Sarah, Mr McQueen's daughter, added: "Seeing Dad so engaged, smiling, and chatting with his grandsons and the wonderful team at Surrey Heights was truly heartwarming.

"The care and effort that went into the day were incredible."

Matt Cecil, head of media at Wy-

combe Wanderers, said: "It was fantastic to hear from the team at Surrey Heights Dementia Care Centre that we had a former player reaching his 100th birthday, and were delighted to be asked to send a personalised shirt and birthday card to mark the occasion.

"So happy birthday Richard on behalf of everyone at Wycombe Wanderers, and thank you to everyone at the care home for making it such a special celebration for him."

Mr McQueen's milestone celebration takes place as Surrey Heights Dementia Care Centre undergoes a £4 million refurbishment.

The centre, once a retreat for literary great George Eliot and inventor Sir Henry Cole, is being transformed with innovative features such as AI-powered fall detection, Alexa Smart Property technology, and enhanced amenities including a cinema, spa salon, and safe outdoor gardens.



Pinewood Studios has revealed expansion proposals

Pinewood Studios reveals proposals for site expansion

PINEWOOD Group has announced a public consultation on the future expansion of Pinewood Studios.

The studio in Buckinghamshire, labelled as 'the spiritual home of the British film industry' by the Prime Minister, is considering a significant development.

The proposed expansion includes additional film stages, production facilities, and a data centre.

This mixed-use development project aligns with the Government's Modern Industrial Strategy, focusing on digital technologies and creative industries.

The public consultation will open a dialogue on February 25 and run until February 27.

The aim is to discuss the development options for the site and obtain community input.

Pinewood Group has been enabling storytellers to bring their creations to life for over 85 years.

The proposed expansion is an effort to keep up with the dynamic and fast-paced nature of the industry.

However, the rising construction costs and business rates have prompted a revision of the existing planning consent.

The consultation period will provide an opportunity for the public to have their say on the future of Pinewood Studios and contribute to the shaping of the site's development options.

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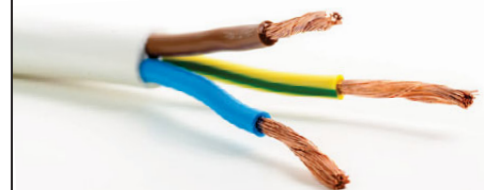


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Sport

HOCKEY

Marlow keep challengers Trojans at bay

MARLOW Hockey Club's men 1st team pulled off what may be a decisive 3-1 win over their nearest rivals, Trojans of Southampton.

The game started in a frantic fashion with end-to-end hockey with Marlow having increasingly more possession. Then Trojans scored after 25 minutes after some persistent play down the Trojan's left wing. That was about the only action on the Marlow goal up to that point. Marlow put that behind them and continued to press without troubling

the visiting goalkeeper very much but won the first penalty corner of the match which captain Sam North put away decisively.

The second half continued at the same furious pace with Marlow having the most possession although Trojans were still dangerous on the break but came against a solid Marlow defence well marshalled by Ollie Deasy. Marlow were putting together a fine display of attacking hockey without creating many clearcut scoring

opportunities until the ball came to Owen Heale who scored with a well-directed shot and his first for the 1st team. That came in the 50th minute and 10 minutes later another Marlow penalty corner was converted by Sam North..

Trojans are now five points behind Marlow in second place with one game in hand.

The 2nds were away to Winchester 1st, who are one of two teams running away with the league They worked hard but found it hard going and lost 4-0



A sizeable crowd enjoyed a Marlow win over Trojans

FOOTBALL

Chesham United suffer a first league defeat of 2025

THERE were three games to report on this week as Chesham travelled to Chelmsford on Saturday and Farnborough on Tuesday night. Meanwhile Chesham's women welcomed QPR to The Meadow in the FAWN on Sunday afternoon.

First to Chelmsford where Chesham were held 1-1, securing their third consecutive draw which extends their unbeaten run to seven.

Chesham made the stronger start and came close in the fourth minute courtesy of Mitchell Weiss. Karl Oliyide then had a goal disallowed for a high challenge on the goalkeeper; but Chelmsford took the lead against the run of play on 17 minutes. There was an element of good fortune in the build-up as the ball fell kindly for Kane Crichlow who ran on to shoot into the corner of the net. Chesham continued to dominate without really threatening, but they were awarded a penalty three minutes from half-time. Ted Collins got a hand on the Matt Lench strike to tip it onto the bar and Samson Esan got to the loose ball first but could only head against the bar and the ball was scrambled away.

Chesham continued to press in the early stages of the second half and on 60 minutes Samson Esan ran forward and his shot beat Collins at his near post to level the scores. From there the game could have gone either way as chances fell to both sides. It could have been decided at the death as a stoppage time long throw from Jack Cawley was fumbled by Collins, and Connor Stevens forced the ball over the line but the referee disallowed the goal for a foul.

On Tuesday night, Farnborough inflicted a first league defeat of 2025 on Chesham, edging a narrow 2-1 victory in Hampshire.

Farnborough came into this match without a win in eight games while Chesham were unbeaten in seven, and both runs came to end in an open game. Chesham dominated the early stages

By Andy Westlake

but failed to make their possession count, but Farnborough's opening goal in first-half stoppage time changed the course of the game. In the second half Chesham wilted before a number of substitutions brought about a revival which nearly earned a point but not quite.

Chesham started well and in the twelfth minute Esan set up Weiss who shot past the advancing keeper Jack Turner but just past the far post. That early momentum continued for the first 20 minutes but midway through the half the home side began to threaten for the first time. Neither side found the target but with eight minutes of stoppage time at the end of the half, the home side took the lead in the fifth of them, Jonathon Stuttle cutting in from the left and firing past Addai inside the far post.

Farnborough doubled their lead with a soft goal on 57 minutes. Olly Pendlebury took a free kick from wide on the home left and spotted a gap at the near post, so shot straight into the net as Dillon Addai tried in vain to get across. On 69 minutes, Chesham halved the deficit. Joseph cut in from the left and the ball ran loose in the home area before Joe Grant drove it into the net. The visitors tried valiantly to find the equaliser and nearly conceded again as Farnborough were awarded a penalty. However Dillon Addai dived to his right to beat away Aaron Kuhl's shot. Chesham now sit in 12th place in the division with the visit of Weymouth to come this Saturday afternoon.

*Despite lots of endeavour from both sides, QPR and Chesham United FC Women played out a goalless draw, extending the gap from the bottom two to eight points. Their next game is at home on Thursday, February 13 (7.45pm ko) against Actonians LFC.



Chesham United. Picture: Neale Blackburn

FOOTBALL

Holmer fall to defeat on the road at Befont

HOLMER Green fell to a 2-0 defeat at Befont on Saturday in Combined Counties Football League, Division One, writes John Anderson.

Holmer had a strong line-up on paper, but the game is not played on paper.

They started on the front foot, and were awarded a penalty on 14 minutes. The goalkeeper guessed correctly, and was fortunate enough to see the ball come back to safety off his legs.

This setback should have spurred The Greens on to redouble their efforts. But their previous inventive and attacking play waned, and Befont got on top to look comfortable for the rest of the game.

They equalised on 31 minutes following a set-piece. This was not cleared decisively, and two Holmer players got in each other's way. The unlucky Lloyd Majaya inadvertently brought down an opponent, whose presence behind him he had not noticed in the confusion and the penalty-kick was converted.

Half-time was a chance for Holmer to re-set. But any chance of this quickly received a jolt. Again, a set-piece was their undoing.

On 47 minutes a right-wing corner travelled beyond the far post. A Holmer player allowed an opponent to get in a good turn. Goalkeeper Sam Bell had to cover what was now his near post, in case of a shot. The short and lofted cross was extremely accurate, evading Bell. Holmer still had two defenders on the line. But they were static, and in no position to contest the ball with an oncoming Befont player who comfortably outjumped them to score.

There was still plenty of time to regain the initiative; but despite four substitutes being used, only Joshua Peck who worked hard over the entire game really looked like making any impression on the Befont rearguard.

The game fizzled out to a regulation win for the home side. Holmer also lost Connor McGinty. The Referee seemed to miss a blatant shoulder charge in his back, and the young midfielder was vociferous and/or abusive enough to deserve being sent off.

Not good day for The Greens, their display showing why they are not yet ready to challenge the top teams in their ultimate quest to return to Step Five.

Holmer travel to Colliers Wood United on Saturday (3pm ko) for their next Division One test.

FOOTBALL

The Rams earn point on the road



Luke Neville warms up ahead of his 2nd Beaconsfield debut. Picture: Craig Anderson

BEACONSFIELD earned a good point on the road on Saturday, drawing 1-1 away at AFC Dunstable, writes Arran White.

There was little in the opening 15 minutes, with both teams fighting to get on the front foot. That soon changed when Manu Oke-William gave Beaconsfield the lead in the 17th minute. A freekick was whipped in and headed towards goal by Luke Neville, who returned to the club from Bracknell Town this week, and looked destined for the back of the net, with Oke-William smashing home from close range to ensure Beaconsfield took the lead.

Beaconsfield could have had more in the first half, with Matty Harriott seeing a shot hit the bar in the 24th minute, before Charlie Smith fired over from close range inside the box in the 40th.

The second half was far more evenly

balanced, with both teams fighting for the ball and limiting each other to only a couple of chances. AFC Dunstable drew level in the 56th minute when Kwadwo Bugyei-Kyei found himself with space inside the Beaconsfield box and turned to fire into the bottom corner. The game became a bit scrappy after the equaliser, with neither team really creating much in the way of efforts on goal. Beaconsfield defended well when needed, with Luke Neville winning every ariel duel that came his way. As the game entered five added minutes Beaconsfield looked to create a winner, but were kept out by AFC Dunstable, with Akiel Raffie firing over from the edge of the box in the closing moments.

Beaconsfield return to action tomorrow, when they face Hertford Town at Holloways Park at 3pm.

FOOTBALL

Flackwell drop points in a 10-goal thriller with Bedford

A wise man once said 'The difference between the impossible and the possible lies in a man's determination' - a quote that could not be truer of both Flackwell Heath and top of the table Real Bedford, as both sides played out a thrilling 5-5 draw last Saturday, writes Glenn Alcock.

In some senses, the contest between these two sides should have been a case of David vs Goliath, with the Heathens facing a well-backed, top of the table opponent who have recently announced ongoing discussions to merge the club with step three Bedford Town.

Flackwell Heath often raise their levels in big games - victories against Slough Town and Rayners Lane in recent years being particularly memorable - so it was no surprise to see the Reds displaying excellent intensity, desire and spirit through the match.

The Heathens needed their forward line to be on top form, and as has been the case in countless games through the season, Wiktor Makowski and Michael Harding delivered. Makowski's first goal of the game in the first half was particularly memorable, collecting the ball on the left, cutting inside and firing an unstop-

pable shot into the top right hand corner.

Earlier, Harding had fired the Reds into an early lead after capitalising on a blocked effort, fashioned by 'Magic Makowski'. Makowski's second goal was also memorable, largely for the sublime X-ray vision of young Jamie Ayres to supply a reverse ball, bamboozling the Real Bedford defence and allowing Makowski to notch up yet another league goal.

Further goals from Jack Shakespeare and Matthew Ayres put the away side into what appeared to be a somewhat dominant 5-3 scoreline just after the 70-minute mark.

A determined Real Bedford fight-back saw the extremely impressive Josh Setchell pull the scores back to 5-4 only four minutes later.

Unfortunately, it wasn't to be; a last gasp penalty was awarded to The Pirates, which was confidently dispatched by Joey Evans for his hat trick.

● Flackwell Heath will need to maintain the same intensity on Saturday, as they face another tough test away to high flying Barton Rovers, a 3pm kick off at The Winton Haulage Stadium.



Michael Harding scoring the first goal for Flackwell Heath. Image: Glenn Alcock

Marlow Women edge out Trojans in thriller

MARLOW Hockey Club Women 1st welcomed Trojans 1s to Pound Lane this week, earning a superb 4-3 victory. The first fixture between the two teams had resulted in a heartbreaking 1-0 defeat for Marlow, galvanizing the Reds' determination for the rematch.

Trojans started with more fire, earning a penalty corner in the first half which was coolly dispatched by their prolific striker Sheehan to take the lead. Marlow's captain Martha Goodridge replied just three minutes later to equalize.

The game was end-to-end with both teams striving to score. Marlow's Rachel Clarke hit the crossbar and at the other end, Alys Ramm had to make crucial saves to keep the score level. The breakthrough came shortly before half-time with a deflected penalty corner by Colette Fitzpatrick to put the home side ahead.

Trojans fought back with two goals in two minutes constructed by the formidable Sheehan to take the lead 3-2. Marlow's heads did not drop and Ellie Yeomans equalized. With a quarter of the game to

go and determined not to suffer the same fate as the earlier fixture, Marlow fought hard to win the game. Successive saves from Ramm and a vital winner for Clarke ended the exhilarating match, ensuring three points for the Reds and increased Marlow's buffer of eight points from the relegation zone.

Marlow's 2nd team was made to work hard by Windsor 1sts for their 1-0 win. Tanya Lumley's second-half strike proved the difference. Marlow looked in control but had to be alert to the home

team's counter-attack. Ruby Duncan looked assured in saving a couple of corner strikes and Marlow had circle entries of their own. Lenny Conetta and Isla Sutherland dictated play and Marlow's attack looked strong after the break. Windsor were breaking up play and with the clock ticking the match was heading for a stalemate until Lumley's moment of magic. She received the ball at the top of the D, and turned smarty to create enough space for an early reverse stick shot that found the corner.

DARTS

PRDDL: The latest results

Division 1

Bradmoor Farm Warriors 5-6
Chinnor Pavilion B
Chinnor Pavilion A 6-5 Thame
Snooker Club
Chinnor Pavilion D 4-7 Bledlow Village Cricket Club A
Rivets 10-1 Bradmoor Farm A
The Bull A 6-5 The Crown Royals
The Crown Jacks 4-7 The Honey Bee
Weavers 7-4 Whiteleaf Cross B

Division 2

The Bell 8-3 The Plough
Bradmoor Farm B 4-7 Bay 19
Chinnor Pavilion C 2-9 Bradmoor Farm D
Golden Cross 5-6 Aylesbury Vale FC
The Black Horse 4-7 New Zealand
Wendover RBL 4-7 The Three Horseshoes

This week's fixtures:

Division 2

Bay 19 vs The Bell

Knockout Cup

Bradmoor Farm B vs Rivets (Match to be played at The Plough)

The Crown Royals vs Thame Snooker Club (Match to be played at The Bull)

Knockout Plate Cup

The Three Horseshoes vs Wendover RBL (Match to be played at The Bell)

Aylesbury Vale FC vs The Black

FOOTBALL

Christou earns first victory

TWO goals in the opening seven minutes sent Risborough Rangers well on their way to a 2-0 victory at Hilltop in Combined Counties Premier Division North.

In need of points to drag themselves away from the foot of the table, Saturday's win will come as a great relief to new manager Kevin Christou - securing his first victory since taking over.

Arel Anu opened the scoring in the second minute after winning back possession deep in opposition territory.

Alex Awobimpe's deflected effort doubled the advantage before 10 minutes was on the clock to give the Rangers some breathing room.

Hilltop hit the woodwork and Risborough saw an effort cleared off the line in what proved to be a breathless first-half.

Much calmer after the break, Risborough controlled large portions and deservedly earned a win and clean sheet, moving them up to 17th ahead of Saturday's meeting with mid-table Wokingham Town (3pm ko).

Sport

Bradley sent off as Wycombe Wanderers earn away draw

TEN-MAN Wycombe Wanderers remain firmly in the League One automatic promotion places after being held to a 1-1 draw away at Cambridge United.

It was the Chairboys' first visit to the Abbey on a Saturday since October 2017, and they started the better.

Dan Udoh saw a header go wide, Fred Onyedimma's crosses caused the Cambridge defence problems, whilst Beryly Lubala also went close.

Wanderers were missing striker Richard Kone, who was nursing a knee injury picked up in the 2-1 victory over Barnsley four days earlier.

Cambridge looked threatening whenever Dom Ballard got the ball as he was United's main source of creativity.

But Wanderers began to show their dominance. Stevens was on hand to catch several of Chairboys crosses

before Sam Grace's side took the lead.

Lubala's low drive was fumbled by the keeper, and there was Cameron Humphreys to smash home his fifth of the season on 34 minutes.

It was his first goal in two months.

The match descended into chaos in a crazy spell of play with 24 minutes remaining. A Cambridge corner, missed by everyone, resulted in a penalty to the home side after Sonny Bradley was

deemed to have elbowed Michael Morrison off the ball.

The 33-year-old was given a straight red card, and United were given a penalty. But Josh Stokes's spot-kick was brilliantly saved by Franco Ravizzoli.

The ball did find its way into net from the resulting kick, but referee Martin Woods, deemed that the Argentine shot-stopper was fouled.

But Stokes made up for his penalty

miss with a terrific bending effort with nine minutes remaining.

Ravizzoli was on hand to make several important stops in the dying moments, as Wanderers held on.

Wycombe stay second, four points behind first-placed Birmingham City, but six ahead of third-placed Wrexham. Up next is a trip to Preston North End on February 8.

Attendance: 6,866 (865 away).

Wycombe part company with David Wheeler

WYCOMBE Wanderers have confirmed the departure of utility player David Wheeler by mutual consent.

The 34-year-old, who joined the Chairboys from Queens Park Rangers in the summer of 2019, became a fan favourite during his time at Adams Park, playing 209 times and scoring 19 times.

However, game time has been hard to come by this term, as he has featured just 12 times.

His first season in South Buckinghamshire saw him play a huge role in the club's promotion to the Championship, and in his second year, he became the first person to score a winning goal for Wycombe in the division.

This came in Wanderers' 1-0 home victory against Sheffield Wednesday in October 2020.

His final goal for Wycombe came in a 2-0 away victory against Port Vale in April 2024, whilst his farewell ap-

pearance was in the 2-0 home win against Portsmouth in the FA Cup last month.

The latter also happened to be Matt Bloomfield's final game in charge before he departed for Luton Town.

Chief Football Officer Dan Rice said: "David has been a fantastic servant to Wycombe Wanderers throughout his time here and can absolutely leave the club with his head held high after making so many valuable contributions on and off the pitch.

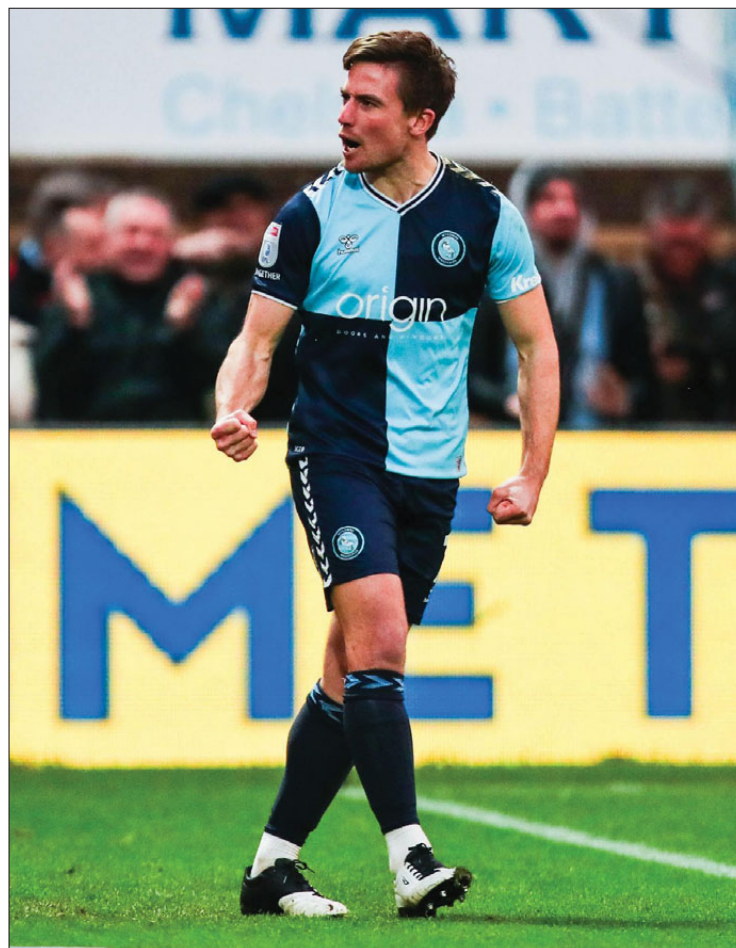
"Even with his playing time being limited this season, he has continued to be a model professional in his work ethic and his support of those around him, and we wish him every success for his next chapter, and thank him for everything he has achieved during his time here.

"He will always be welcome back as a friendly face around Adams Park

and hope he will be able to return soon to receive a deserved fond farewell from the supporters who've enjoyed and appreciated his efforts every time he's pulled on the shirt."

Club captain Jack Grimmer added: "On behalf of all the lads who are here now and those who've played alongside Wheels over the past five and a half years, I just want to say a massive thank you to a guy who's been an incredible team-mate and a fantastic ambassador for our football club.

"He will go down in history as being such an important part of the Wycombe Wanderers team that reached the Championship for the first time and we've all been so proud to see his achievements and accolades away from the pitch, particularly becoming the PFA's first Sustainability Champion and winning the Climate Action Award last year."



David Wheeler (pictured scoring against Peterborough United in February 2024) has left Wycombe by mutual consent Image: Rhianna Chadwick/PA Wire

Bishop heading to Cambridge

WYCOMBE Wanderers have confirmed the exit of goalkeeper Nathan Bishop.

The 25-year-old, who only played five times for the Chairboys season on loan from Sunderland, has penned a deal with League One rivals Cambridge United.

He joins the Us on loan from the Black Cats until the end of the campaign.

Coincidentally, his last involvement in a Wanderers matchday squad was being an unused substitute in Wycombe's 1-1 draw against the Amber Army on Saturday.

He arrived at Adams Park two years after an initial loan move

from Manchester United fell through, initially as the club's number one.

Bishop started the opening day defeat to Wrexham as well as the home loss to Birmingham City three days later, with an appearance against Northampton Town in between.

But a serious leg injury meant he was on the sidelines for four months, allowing Franco Ravizzoli to step in as the club's first choice.

He made his long-awaited return to the starting 11 in the 2-1 home loss to Swindon Town in the EFL Trophy back in December, before coming on as a seventh-minute sub in Wycombe's

2-0 home victory against Portsmouth in the FA Cup.

This was Matt Bloomfield's last game in charge of the Chairboys.

Chief Football Officer Dan Rice said: "Nathan started the season as first-choice in goal but was really unfortunate to sustain his injury.

"He's been the ultimate professional in how he's dealt with the situation and we thank him for all his efforts and contributions.

"We're really pleased that a first-class keeper and person has got the chance to go and play regular football and he leaves us with our very best wishes."

Ex-Wycombe Wanderers winger leaves new club after just two months

A former Wycombe Wanderers winger has left his new club after just two months citing 'personal reasons'.

Connor Parsons, who joined the Chairboys in the summer of 2021 as a free agent following a brief stint with Icelandic side Dalvik/Reynir, agreed to sign for National League club Dagenham & Redbridge in the middle of December.

This was on a free after his contract with Irish outfit Waterford expired, with his transfer back to England being active in January.

His return to the UK was met with great excitement by fans, but after playing in just two games, the 24-year-old handed in a transfer request.

According to a statement that was published on the Dags' X account on February 5, Parsons wanted to leave

the club due to 'personal reasons'.

He has since signed for Ireland Premier Division side Bohemian FC on a permanent deal for an undisclosed fee.

Speaking on his move back to Ireland, Parsons, who scored 11 goals in 77 matches across two seasons at Waterford, said: "Some things just don't work out, and I think this [move back to Ireland], is the right thing for me.

"This is where I need to be."

Parsons spent two years with Wycombe between 2021 and 2023, playing seven first-team games.

He even managed to score on his debut which came in a 3-1 home loss to the Aston Villa U21s in August 2021.

All of his appearances for the Chairboys came in cup competitions,

Wycombe unveil two more players on Deadline Day

WYCOMBE Wanderers have confirmed the double signing of full-back Fin Back and midfielder Xavier Simons on Transfer Deadline.

The former arrives at Adams Park on a permanent transfer from Premier League Nottingham Forest, whilst Simons joins on loan from Championship outfit Hull City.

They were the third and fourth new faces to join the South Buckinghamshire on the last day of the transfer window, following the signings of left winger Adam Reach and goalkeeper Nathan Bishop.

It means the club have signed 12 new players this month.

Chief Football Officer Dan Rice said: "Fin is an exciting prospect for the future and we're pleased to be able to bring him into the club during this window to strengthen the squad.

"He's grown up in a fantastic footballing environment in Forest's academy and now we feel this is a great next step for his career to come and be part of what we're building here at Wycombe."

On Simons, Rice added: "Xavier's an extremely promising young talent who's already played a lot of football this season at Championship level and we're really pleased to bring him to Wycombe to strengthen our options during the run-in.

"He's had a fantastic upbringing in the academies at Brentford and Chelsea and is capable of playing in a number of different positions which could be really beneficial for us."



Fin Back (left on the ground) and Xavier Simons (right in the Hull kit), have signed for Wycombe Wanderers Image: PA

Back, 22, started his career at Nottingham Forest and spent 14 years with the Midlands team, but only played five first-team games.

They all came in the 2021/22 campaign, which was the year the Reds won promotion to the Premier League.

He would then spend two consecutive seasons at Carlisle United.

His first year saw him win

the League Two play-offs in 2023, but the Cumbrians were relegated back to the fourth tier a year later, finishing bottom of the table.

During those two years, Back featured in 46 games.

For Simons, the 21-year-old started his career at Brentford before joining Chelsea.

He spent seven years with the Blues but only played one first-team game for the West London club.



A loan spell to Hull City followed in 2022/23 before he joined permanently, and last year, he had a brief stint on loan at Fleetwood Town.

Prior to his move to Adams Park, he played 22 times for the Tigers this term, scoring twice.

Wycombe Wanderers' 2025 Winter Transfer Window – Arrivals

Ryan Cole Jonny Pettitt Sonny Bradley (loan) An-

ders Hagelskjær Magnus Westergaard Alex Lowry James Berry Caleb Taylor (loan) Adam Reach Will Norris Fin Back Xavier Simons (loan)

Wycombe Wanderers' 2025 Winter Transfer Window – Exits

Luca Woodhouse (loan) Taylor Clark (loan) Ryan Tafazolli (loan) Matt Butcher (loan) Alex Hartridge (loan) Brandon Hanlan (loan).

CHAIRBOYS

Two leave in busy transfer window

WYCOMBE Wanderers have confirmed the departures of Alex Hartridge and Matt Butcher.

On January 30, the Chairboys announced that defender Hartridge has re-joined Exeter City on loan until the rest of the season.

Additionally, Butcher has signed for Bristol Rovers, also on loan.

The two have struggled for regular game time this season.

Hartridge was the club's first signing of the campaign, joining from the Grecians on a free transfer, but has only played 15 times in all competitions, receiving seven yellow cards and two reds.

His last appearance was in the Chairboys' 4-3 away loss to Beaconsfield Town in the Berks & Bucks Cup on January 14.

Chief football officer, Dan Rice, said: "Alex has been unfortunate due to the excellent form of others in his position, and this is a great opportunity for him to return home and play some football.

"We wish him all the best and we'll be monitoring his performances during his time there."

Another face leaving Adams Park is midfielder Matt Butcher, who has become Bristol Rovers' second signing of the transfer window.

The 27-year-old signed for Wycombe 12 months ago and was a regular starter at the back end of last season.

But the impressive form of Aaron Morley and Josh Scowen this term has reduced his game time, as he has completed 90 minutes just nine times this season.

Rice said: "Matt has been first-class in his appreciation of the strong competition for places in midfield, and his support for his team-mates when he hasn't been playing.

"He is a true professional in the way he conducts himself day in, day out.

"It's only right that a player of his ability and character deserves the opportunity to go and get minutes under his belt, so we wish him every success and look forward to keeping close tabs on his performances and seeing him back here in the summer."

FOOTBALL

Hanlan leaves for League One rivals

WYCOMBE Wanderers striker Brandon Hanlan has moved to League One rivals Stevenage on loan for the rest of the season.

The 27-year-old, who joined the Chairboys from Bristol Rovers back in the summer of 2021, has only featured 13 times this campaign, scoring twice.

His first appearance of the term came in the 3-2 FA Cup victory against York City in November, days before the anniversary of him suffering a serious ACL injury 12 months prior.

Coincidentally, his long-term absence came against the Boro. Additionally, Hanlan scored the

penultimate goal of the Matt Bloomfield managerial reign at Adams Park.

His strike in the 2-0 win over Portsmouth in the FA Cup came four days before Bloomfield's sudden exit for Luton Town.

In other news, Wanderers' league matches against Birmingham City and Burton Albion have been moved to TV slots.

The Chairboys face the table-topping Blues at St Andrews on March 1, with the kick-off time being 12.30pm.

They will then face the Brewers three days later, kicking off at 8pm at Adams Park.



Wanderers' Brandon Hanlan has left. Image: Bradley Collyer/PA

SPORT



Wycombe sign goalkeeper Will Norris on free transfer

WYCOMBE Wanderers have confirmed the signing of former Wolverhampton Wanderers, Burnley and Portsmouth goalkeeper, Will Norris.

The 31-year-old joins the Chairboys on a free transfer after his contract with Pompey was cancelled by mutual consent.

He played every game of the Blues' title-winning 2023/24 season, where the South Coast club gained promotion to the second tier for the first time in 12 years.

However, he hasn't played since Portsmouth's 6-1 away loss to Stoke City in October.

His arrival at Adams Park means he will battle with Franco Ravizzoli for the club's number one spot.

Additionally, Nathan Bishop has been recalled by Sunderland and has now

joined Cambridge United, Shamal George is out with a groin injury and Laurie Shala, who has spent this season on loan at Non League Potters Bar, could also be heading for the exit.

The Kosovan youngster is expected to sign leave on loan.

Chief Football Officer Dan Rice commented: "Will was the best keeper in League 1 last season and it's fantastic for us to bring him to Wycombe and add strength to our goalkeeping department for the run-in and beyond.

"With Nathan Bishop ending his loan and Shamal George currently injured, it was an important position for us to recruit for, and we're really pleased to bring in someone of Will's pedigree and experience."



Will Norris (pictured for Portsmouth) has joined Wycombe and will wear the number 50 shirt. Image: Richard Sellers

Mike Dodds on joining Wycombe and his aims

WYCOMBE Wanderers head coach Mike Dodds has said it would be 'poor' of him to implement his style of play on the team with 17 league games of the season remaining.

The 38-year-old, who was appointed as the Chairboys' new man in charge following Matt Bloomfield's exit last month, joins the Adams Park side on a three-year deal from Sunderland.

He comes with Wanderers sitting second in the League One table, four points clear of third place Wrexham.

Wycombe have been in the hunt for promotion to the Championship since September and haven't dropped out of the top two since October.

Speaking on his move to South Buckinghamshire, Dodds, who will take charge of his first game this weekend against Preston North End in the FA Cup, said: "They made contact with Sunderland around 10 days/two weeks ago and I was opened-minded by it.

"What became very apparent during our meetings and conversations was that we were incredibly aligned, and I am very impressed by the ownership group.

"I am impressed by their vision and the direction they want to take the club and I have always said at one point in my career, I wanted to be a head coach.

"Did I think it would happen this quickly? Probably not if I am totally honest but sometimes you can get an opportunity that is too good to turn down.

James Richings

james.richings@newsquest.co.uk

"When I looked at the dressing room when I spoke to people in football and said, 'What's this player like?' or 'How is the character of this person?' every character reference I got was immaculate."

Despite being named as Wanderers' new head coach on February 2, he remained with Sunderland for the away league match to Middlesbrough one day later.

When asked about the unique situation of remaining with the Black Cats despite starting a new job with Wanderers days later, he explained: "Sunderland were very keen for me to be involved in the game on Monday as it was a huge game with it being a local derby, and it was a top six clash.

"I also have a strong relationship with the ownership group there along with the fans and the players, so I didn't want to leave them in the lurch as I thought that was the professional thing to do.

"I must also say Sunderland handled the exit with complete class and Wycombe's professionalism around it was incredible."

Finally, on the rest of the season, he concluded: "In the short term, my role for the last 16 games is to try and direct the team and stay on the current path we are on. There's no need for wholesale changes."



Mike Dodds (pictured in 2023) left Sunderland to join Wycombe at the start of this month. Image: Mike Egerton/PA

Bradley ban is revoked following an appeal

SONNY Bradley will be available for Wycombe Wanderers' next three matches after his red card against Cambridge United was rescinded.

The 33-year-old centre back started the 1-1 draw versus the Amber Army on February 1, but was dismissed on 64 minutes by referee Martin Woods.

He was deemed to have elbowed Michael Morrison in the Wanderers box whilst defending the corner, and from the resulting incident, Cambridge were awarded a penalty.

However, Josh Stokes' spot kick was saved by Franco Ravizzoli.

At the time of the penalty, Wycombe were 1-0 up thanks to a Cameron Humphreys strike, but Stokes did get United level with a brilliant curling effort with seven minutes left.

If the red card stood, Bradley would have missed Wanderers' next three games against Preston North End, Crawley Town and Bristol Rovers respectively.

A statement from the club reads: "An independent Regulatory Commission has removed Sonny Bradley's three-match suspension following a successful claim of wrongful dismissal."

He is now available to play in the Chairboys' FA Cup clash against Preston at Deepdale on Saturday.