

This guide has been prepared by Neil Jensen, Media Officer, Hitchin Town FC



# Hitchin Town Football Club

**Media Guide 2011-12      Version 3.0 August 2 2011**

## **Club Details**

Hitchin Town FC  
Top Field  
Fishponds Road  
Hitchin  
Herts  
SG5 1NU  
Telephone: 01462 459028

## **Ground details:**

**Capacity:** 4,554 **Seating:** 500

**Midweek games 2011-12:** Monday 7.45pm

**Saturday games:** 3pm

**Admission Prices:** Adults £9, Concession £5, Children 16 and under £ 1

**Season tickets:** £ 150, £75, £20

**Colours:** Yellow/Green/Green

**Second choice:** Green/Green/Green

## **Club Contacts - Appointed spokespeople**

Terry Barratt (Chairman) 07836 558727

Carl Williams (Manager) By arrangement with Media Officer

Neil Jensen (Media Officer) 0798 498 2034 [communications@hitchintownfc.co.uk](mailto:communications@hitchintownfc.co.uk)

Roy Izzard (Secretary) 01462 433171

## **Commercial**

For advertising and other commercial opportunities, call **Fred Andrews** on 01462 452980

## **Website address**

[www.hitchintownfc.co.uk](http://www.hitchintownfc.co.uk)

## **Twitter address**

@HitchinTownfc

## **Facebook**

Hitchin Town

## **Other media**

*The Canary Classified* – to be launched in August 2011

## **Posters**

Hitchin Town home games are advertised at around 50 outlets in the North Herts area.

This guide has been prepared by Neil Jensen, Media Officer, Hitchin Town FC

### **Weekly News Bulletin**

Distributed by email to more than 200 addresses – including local press, radio, agencies and supporters of the club.

### **Note for writers and editors - Hitchin Town FC**

**Hitchin Town Football Club plays in the EVO-STIK Southern League Premier Division, which sits at Step 3 in the National Game System. In May 2011, the club won promotion to this division after spending two years at Step 4.**

**Hitchin Town Football Club was reformed in 1928 after a 17-year absence from senior football. The club can trace its roots back to 1865, and the first Hitchin club played in the inaugural FA Cup competition in 1871-72. Hitchin Town has played at Top Field, Fishponds Road, since its reformation.**

Since 1928, the club has played in the Spartan League (1928-1939), the Athenian League (1945-1963), the Isthmian League (1963-2004) and the Southern League (2004 – to date). The club reached two FA Amateur Cup semi-finals – in 1960-61 and 1962-63, and in addition to various county cups, has won the London Senior Cup, the East Anglian Cup, the Southern League Cup and the AFA Senior Cup.

Hitchin Town has won two championships in its history – 1934-35 (Spartan League Premier Division) and 1992-93 (Isthmian League Division One).

In the FA Cup, Hitchin Town has achieved “giant-killing” status twice – in 1994-95 (Hereford United) and 1995-96 (Bristol Rovers). Hitchin Town have reached the FA Cup second round four times – 1973-74, 1976-77, 1994-95 and 1995-96. The first round has been reached five times – 1953-54, 1958-59, 1960-61, 1974-75 and 1978-79.

Hitchin Town has met the following current Football League clubs in competitive games: Crystal Palace, Ipswich Town, Millwall, Peterborough United, Watford; Bournemouth, MK Dons (as Wimbledon), Stevenage, Wycombe Wanderers, Yeovil; Aldershot, Barnet, Bristol Rovers, Burton Albion, Dagenham & Redbridge, Gillingham, Hereford United and Swindon Town.

Hitchin Town’s team manager is currently Carl Williams (since 2010), assisted by Mark Burke. The club’s chairman is Terry Barratt, who has held this position since 1991. Mr Barratt is also a member of the Southern League board.

### **Hitchin Town: Promotion underlines huge potential**

When Hitchin Town clinched promotion to the EVO-STIK Southern League Premier Division in May 2011, it ended a two-year period in which the club felt like it was playing in the wilderness. It was the lowest point of the club’s history, but Hitchin were there on merit after a dismal decade on the field.

This guide has been prepared by Neil Jensen, Media Officer, Hitchin Town FC

Promotion not only brought the club back to familiar territory, it underlined the potential at Hitchin. The club ended the campaign with big four-figure crowds and an average gate of 400 – the sixth best in the entire three division league.

Promotion was achieved playing positive, attractive football, yielding over 100 goals. John Frendo, with 31 goals, topped the Central Division's scoring list and players like Zak Burke and Jamie Arlick were high in the charts.

The 2-0 play-off win over Daventry was a great day for the club, coming a week after the title had been secured by local rivals Arlesey in front of over 1,500 people at Top Field. As manager Carl Williams said in an emotional post-match address: "This is a proper football club with proper people doing things the right way and today we are winners."

But then the club has always been able to win the hearts of the local community. Since 1928, when Hitchin Town was reformed, the trials and tribulations of the club have often captured the imagination of the town. The question people are asking now is: are the Canaries on the brink of a new golden era in the club's history?

There have been some outstanding periods since the late 1800s when the first club's members kicked a ball around at Hitchin cricket ground. Hitchin were among the handful of clubs that entered the first FA Cup in 1871-72 and for that reason alone, the club will always have a place in the history of Association Football.

The community has often come out to demonstrate its affection – such as in the 1930s when the railway station was packed with people welcoming the team back from London after winning the AFA Senior Cup. Even local councillors and other key figures from the town had to admit that the club had done more than most to promote well being in Hitchin.

The 1930s were indeed a glorious time for the club, but they were, in many ways, a big fish in the small pond that was the Spartan League. As the Canaries moved into the Athenian League, life was tougher. But in the late 1950s and early 1960s, an exciting team reached two FA Amateur Cup semi-finals and threatened to win the league. Thousands watched the club at White City and Craven Cottage – the venues for Hitchin's defeats at the hands of Walthamstow and Sutton respectively.

The next high point for the club was the late 1960s when an uncompromising team, built by Vince Burgess, finished runners-up in the Isthmian League and a year later, picked up the London Senior Cup. As the seventies arrived, the Canaries built a reputation as FA Cup specialists, reaching the second round in 1973-74 and 1976-77 and the first round in 1974-75 and 1978-79.

It wasn't until the early 1990s that the club came to the fore again, however. Andy Melvin built a vibrant team that won promotion back to the Isthmian Premier in 1993 and then went on to claim two "scalps" in the FA Cup in the form of Hereford United (1994) and Bristol Rovers (1995).

Hitchin missed out on the "cut" when non-league football was restructured in 2004 and moved into the Southern League. Apart from a Southern League Cup win in 2005-06, this heralded the start of a disappointing era, capped by relegation in 2009. Two years on,

This guide has been prepared by Neil Jensen, Media Officer, Hitchin Town FC

though, Hitchin are back in the Premier and stronger on the field than at any time since the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. And, on the evidence of the crowds flocking back to Top Field, the locals are loving it...

### **Squad 2011-12 (as at August 2 2011)**

#### **Martin Bennett**

Born 27-3-87 in Bedford. Since making his debut in 2007-08 season, Martin has developed into an outstanding goalkeeper that could go on to become one of the club's best number ones. He arrived at Top Field as a little-known youngster but his consistency has won him praise from opposing managers. He made his debut on October 20 2007 against Eastbourne Town in the FA Trophy, and at the end of last season, had made 159 appearances for the Canaries.

#### **Tom Pepper**

Born 14.9.88 in Enfield. Tom has had two spells with Hitchin. He first came to the club in mid-season 2007-08 from Dagenham & Redbridge, making his debut on December 15 2007 against Bromsgrove Rovers. He left the club following relegation to join Cambridge City, but returned a few months later to regain his form with the Canaries. A talented full back, his speed and aggression down the flank were key in Hitchin's promotion winning campaign. He has made 145 appearances and has scored two goals.

#### **Josh Bickerstaff**

Josh was one of the finds of the season, joining in the second half of the campaign from Stotfold. Born in Stevenage on January 31 1991, he is seen as a player with a big future with Hitchin. He made his debut at Aylesbury on March 26 2011 and made the number three shirt his own by the end of the campaign. 14 appearances.

#### **Tony Fontenelle**

Appointed player-coach in the summer, Tony is an ebullient character who is very popular inside and outside the dressing room. His first spell with the club was in 2002-03, when he joined from Arlesey Town. A flying winger in those days, he didn't quite fit in at Hitchin and moved on after a few months having made his debut against Ford United (away) on August 20 2002. In a long and varied career, he has played for Dunstable, Barton, Arlesey and Brackley. Born September 26 1977. He has made 118 appearances for the club, scoring 11 goals.

#### **Danny Payne**

Danny worked hard to get into contention at the club and last season, he demonstrated he had developed into a versatile and competitive addition to the squad. He made his bow on November 18 2008 against Arlesey in the Southern League Cup. And last season, he scored his first goal for the club. Born August 21 1990 in Stevenage. 31 appearances, one goal.

#### **Marc Leach**

Tall imposing central defender who joined the club in the summer from Arlesey Town. Born

This guide has been prepared by Neil Jensen, Media Officer, Hitchin Town FC

in Hemel Hempstead on July 12 1983, he has played for a number of clubs at various levels, including Hemel, Slough, Aylesbury United, Chesham, Boreham Wood, Wycombe Wanderers, Berkhamsted and Wingate & Finchley.

### **Laurie Stewart**

Joined Hitchin in the summer from Harlow Town. Central defender who has also played for Cambridge City, Ware and Bishop's Stortford. Born January 20 1987 in Harlow.

### **Dean Gilbert**

Dean skippered Hitchin to promotion in 2010-11 after a highly consistent campaign for the 28 year-old defender. Now in his second spell with the club, after playing for Arlesey and Enfield, Dean came to Hitchin in December 2007, making his debut on December 15 2007 against Bromsgrove Rovers. Born December 2 1982, he has made 157 appearances for the Canaries, scoring six goals.

### **Josh Cook**

Promising full back who graduated through the club's youth system to make his debut last season against Bedford in the Red Insure Cup (October 26 2010). Born February 1 1993 in Luton.

### **Louis Lee**

Louis has been a revelation since signing for Hitchin in the close season of 2009 from Stotfold, making his debut on August 11 2009 against Cheshunt in the Herts Charity Cup. He quickly settled in to become a consistent and combative midfielder with an eye for goal. Can also appear in defence. Has now made 88 appearances, scoring 10 goals. Born June 26 1988 in Stevenage.

### **Ieuan Lewis**

Amazingly, Ieuan is still only 22 years old (born 27-11-87 in Cardiff) but seems to have been around the local football scene for years. He made his debut for Hitchin while on loan from Stevenage on January 8 2005 against Team Bath. After being released by Stevenage, Ieuan played for Arlesey Town before rejoining the Canaries in December 2007. A potential-rich wide-man, he has already appeared 165 times for the club, scoring 17 times.

### **Callum Donnelly**

The latest in a long line of Donnellys to play for the club, Callum joined Hitchin in the summer of 2010. He made his debut on August 15 2010 at Rugby and went on to become one of the most consistent players at the club last season. His tenacious performances in midfield earned him the 2010-11 Supporters Club Player of the Year award. Born September 21 1988, he has also played for Stotfold and Boreham Wood. 48 appearances, 6 goals.

### **Luke Gregson**

Born April 11 1982, Luke is in his third spell with the club. He came to Hitchin in the second half of the 2007-08 season and his gritty performances in midfield helped avoid relegation. He made his debut on February 16 2008 against Yate Town and has appeared 59 times, scoring four goals. Previous clubs include Boreham Wood, Arlesey and Stotfold.

### **John Frendo**

There are few more prolific goalscorers in non-league football than John, who signed a contract with the Canaries in the summer after a season in which he was top goalscorer in the Southern League Central Division. Born in Enfield on November 1 1984, John has played for Ware, Chesham and Cambridge City. He has scored goals at every club and marked his Hitchin debut with a goal on September 14 2010 at Daventry. He scored 31 goals in 34 games last season.

### **Jamie Arlick**

With 51 goals in 99 appearances, Jamie has an excellent scoring record since arriving at Hitchin in the close season of 2009. He started his career with Northampton Town and later played for Tiptree United. He made his debut for Hitchin on August 15 2009 against Marlow, scoring in the Canaries 3-0 win. In his first season, he scored 33 goals, winning the Golden Boot in the Southern League Midlands Division. In 2009-10, despite being on the bench for long periods, he still managed to net 18 times. Born July 1 1989,

### **Zak Burke**

Born September 15 1989, Zak started his career with Stevenage and made a couple of first team appearances in the Conference. He joined Hitchin in the summer of 2009, making his debut on August 15 2009 against Marlow (scoring a goal). He can play on the wing or in the striker's role, where he played most of 2010-11, scoring 24 goals. In two seasons at Hitchin, he has made 94 appearances, scoring 33 goals.

### **Harry Holland**

Born August 16 1989, Harry joined Hitchin from Baldock Town in July 2011.

### **Ryan Adam**

Promising striker who has graduated through youth and reserves to be in contention for the first team. Made his debut – his only appearance – on November 23 2010 against Hemel Hempstead in the Red Insure Cup.

## **Management**

### **Carl Williams - Manager**

Promotion in his first season as manager makes him one of the most successful Hitchin managers on record. Carl took over from Colin Payne in the summer of 2010 after two years as assistant manager at the club. As a player, Carl appeared for Fulham before going into non-league football – he has had three spells with Hitchin and has made close to 500 appearances for the Canaries. His first team debut was on October 28 1996 against Stevenage Borough in the Herts Charity Cup. Although he rarely plays now, at 34, he is still able to line-up in midfield. Previous clubs include Carshalton, Bedford Town and Cambridge City.

### **Mark Burke – Assistant Manager**

A Hitchin legend with over a quarter of a century of Hitchin Town experience. Mark first came to Top Field in 1985 after a pro career with QPR and Luton Town. In a playing career that took in for than 700 games, Mark skippered Hitchin to promotion in 1993 and 1999 and led the team to two FA Cup giant-killing episodes, against Hereford (1994) and Bristol

This guide has been prepared by Neil Jensen, Media Officer, Hitchin Town FC

Rovers (1995). One of the most consistent defenders in non-league football in his day, Mark finished playing in 2005 and since then has filled a number of roles. He was appointed assistant to Carl Williams on 2010.

## **Commercial Rates**

### **Advertising and Sponsorship 2011/2012**

#### **Pitch Perimeter Board Advertising**

8' x 3' boards £275 per season

Make up cost £150 (First season only)

Advertisers preferring to supply their own boards may do so thus avoiding the make up cost. (Specification to be advised)

Contra-deals for board space can also be considered.

#### **Matchball Sponsorship**

League Standard Ball £60

Includes name on Programme; acknowledgement on PA; naming and presenting HTFC Man of the Match.

#### **Other Sponsorship Opportunities**

Tailored Packages – price on application

In addition to Top Field, the Club offers a wide range of promotional opportunities via community activities; events and individual teams from Youth to Senior level.

For further details, please contact any of the following:

Fred Andrews - 01462 452980

Mick Dring - 07970 492141

Keith Warren - 07973 742048