

## Women go for glory

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WINSFORD is to get its first Women's football team for a decade.

Bosses of the burgeoning Winsford Girls side have unveiled plans to launch a senior team ready for the new season – and the call has gone out for players to help the younger members make a step up into the big time.

### Team aims to work its way to top

Tony Lee, chairman and manager of Winsford Girls, has even set his sights on playing the major women's football outfits like Arsenal and Fulham in the next decade.

He said: "For the first time in nearly 10 years, Winsford will be able to say it has a Ladies' football team, and with girls' football firmly established as a number one sport for female participation, this is a major step forward for our club and the town."

Winsford Girls was set up in 1999 and now has more than 70 players aged six to 16 – but coaches found many players had nowhere to go when they hit adulthood.

Lee added: "With our youth structure intact, we now wish to give an opportunity to any women aged 16 and over to train and play competitive football."

"We have entered a Winsford Ladies team in the Cheshire and South Manchester League for the coming season and the games will be played on a home and away basis, kicking off at 2pm on Sundays."

"Pre-season training starts at the end of June with specialised training in August; the season itself starts on September 5<sup>th</sup> and we desperately need new players aged 16 or over to support our existing squad."

"Our thriving junior club will ensure a constant flow of quality players, but we need some experience to help them along this season. Next season we hope to progress into the new FA League structure and firmly establish ourselves as a top-quality Ladies team."

Lee set up the team a few years ago when he realised his talented daughter had to join a boys club to play the beautiful game.

“Sarah is very talented and I didn’t want her to miss out because of the lack of facilities,” he said.

It paid off, as she is now one of the best up-and-coming girls in Cheshire, scoring 69 goals last season. At 15, she will be ready to join Winsford Ladies next year.

Other youngsters expected to make the grade include central defender Emma Johnson, who has been with the outfit for four years and is the under 16’s captain, Danielle Lydiate, who has played for Blackburn Rovers, centre of excellence, and the versatile Kayleigh Hatfield, who plays on both goal and midfield.

He believes Winsford Girls has become one of the most successful side in Cheshire, if not the North West, and wants to repeat that success on the senior stage.

But he needs three things – players, sponsorship (both for kits and to borrow a minibus for some away games) and a pitch to play the Sunday afternoon home games on.

Winsford Ladies have contacted both Knight’s Grange and Moss Farm in Northwich with a view to playing there, and are also planning to speak to Winsford United.

United secretary Bob Astles said: “We had Witton Ladies playing at the Barton Stadium last year and we would certainly be interested in discussing the situation with Winsford Ladies. It’s a good thing for local clubs as it makes securing financial grants a lot easier.”