

WHITLETTS VICTORIA FOOTBALL CLUB



CONTINGENCY PLAN FOR EMERGENCIES

Introduction

Whitletts Victoria Football Club (“The Club”) is a registered member of the Scottish Football Association and a member West of Scotland Football League. The Club ground is New Voluntary Park, Glenmuir Place, Ayr KA8 9RW. This document details the Clubs contingency plans for emergency situations for New Voluntary Park (“The Ground”).

In producing this document guidance has been taken from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, Guide to Safety at Sports Grounds, Green Book, specifically sections; 3.17, 3.18, 3.20.

The Clubs Contingency Plans have been formulated to provide a structured and progressive response to any incident likely to affect spectator safety inside, or in the immediate environs of the ground. The Club have a separate Stadium Policy, which can be used to supplement some sections of this plan.

The Contingency Plans reflect the requirements placed on the Club by South Ayrshire Council and also follow the guidance on this subject by the Scottish Football Association with respect to Club licensing.

The plans outline the immediate response by the Club to any incident likely to affect spectator safety or disrupt the normal operation of the Ground

The objectives of the Contingency Plans are to:

- i. Ensure the safety of spectators, players, officials and Club employees\helpers
- ii. Provide the immediate response plan to any potential spectator safety risk, and any subsequent actions.
- iii. Maintain public order and control in any ground evacuation
- iv. If appropriate assist and work with Emergency Services in their response to any incident
- v. Prevent damage to the fabric of the ground.

Through a process of Risk Assessment, the incidents referred to in these plans are the ones considered most likely to occur at the ground. The plans cannot however cover every possible eventuality, and flexibility in the adoption of these plans will be essential in catering for this. A copy of the Risk Assessment that was carried out in the preparation of this Contingency Plan is attached as Appendix A.

Only items with an exposure score of 3 and above have been included in this Contingency Plan. Some risks have a low probability, but should they occur the impact is deemed to be high, and as such they have been included in this plan.

Typically for a home game there will be circa 100-150 spectators within the ground. The estimated ground capacity will be approx. 500, although this has not been tested by the local authority. This has been based on one spectator standing at the pitch perimeter fence along 3 sides of the pitch and three deep down the length of the Activity Centre side of the pitch.

Information Regarding New Voluntary Park

Location

New Voluntary Park is located in Glenmuir Pace, Ayr, close to Whitletts Road, one of the main roads into the centre of the town. Access to Whitletts Road is from Whitletts Roundabout on the A77.

There is a car park, capable of holding 34 vehicles immediately outside the ground, with 2 disabled car parking spaces available. An overflow car park available on matchdays, capable of holding 34 vehicles beside the local health centre, next to the stadium. Public parking is also available at the Shoot Soccer Centre, approx. 100m from the ground, as well as on street car parking.

Layout

Club changing rooms for both teams are situated within the Whitletts Activity Centre adjacent to the ground. Access to the pitch is via single gate adjacent to the side of the centre. A corridor for player access is provided with Heras fencing to the pitch and supervised by a matchday steward. The match officials room is located within the boundary of the ground within a modular building, complete with toilet and showering facilities. The modular building also contains a small room for use by the club committee and is surrounded by decking.

The ground is enclosed by a 5m fence surrounding the ground with screening surrounding all areas of the fence to a height of 2.5m.

The main access point into the ground is from the main car park, via a single gate into the ground. To exit the ground, there are two large gates that are opened.

The pitch is 105m x 68m with a 3m run off. There is a solid boundary fence surrounding the pitch to prevent spectator access. In two sections, the fence is lowered to allow better viewing for wheelchair bound spectators. This area is uncovered. Approximately 300m is available for spectator standing around the perimeter of the pitch. Behind the goals and one side of the pitch, the space available to spectators is approx. 1m in depth whilst on the Activity Centre side of the pitch, the depth is a minimum of 5m and a maximum of 12m. It is in this area that plans are developed for a covered area for spectators.

Within the boundaries of the ground, there are two portable toilets and a Catering facility for use by spectators, located adjacent to the Activity Centre. Toileting facilities for people with disabilities are available within the Activity Centre. There is also a large storage container that contains various equipment belonging to the Club and our charity, Vics in the Community.

There is a large building within the boundary of the ground that is currently empty. This building will be redeveloped as a Clubhouse to house changing facilities for players and match officials, medical facilities etc as required by the Scottish FA to meet the criteria for National Club Licensing. It will also contain improved toileting facilities for spectators, including those living with a disability and hospitality facilities, which can also be used by the local community on non-match days.

Events covered by this Contingency Plan (Included in Risk Assessment):

- Fire

- Damage to structures
- Power cut or failure
- Gas release or chemical incident
- Crowd surge or crushing
- Pitch incursion
- Disorder within the ground
- Emergency evacuation
- Adverse weather
- Late arrivals
- Delayed start
- Match abandonment

1. Fire

It has been identified that the following areas within the Ground are at risk from fire:

1.1. Modular Building - in the event of a fire in the modular building, the following steps will be taken: As soon as a Steward or Club Official learns of fire, spectators will be informed immediately by an appropriate method, normally over the public announcement system, or by Club Stewards, are removed safely from the area and moved to a safe area of the ground. The Fire Service will be called immediately. Responsibility for contacting the Fire Service rests with the Club Safety Officer or most senior present Club Official. No-one will be allowed back into this area without the approval of the Club Safety Officer or the most senior present Club Official, and at that stage a general announcement may be made over the public address system.

Depending on the ferocity of the fire it may be necessary to abandon the game and evacuate the Ground. See section 8 of this document for details on emergency evacuation.

1.2. Catering Facility- in the event of a fire in the Refreshment Hut the following steps will be taken: As soon as any alert of a fire is raised the emergency services should be called. A Steward or Club Official will ensure that all personnel are evacuated from the building. Any spectators in the vicinity of the Catering Facility will also be cleared and asked to assemble at a safe distance from the area. Responsibility for contacting the Fire Service rests with the Club Safety Officer or most senior present Club Official. No-one will be allowed back into the building or the area without the approval of the Club Safety Officer or the most senior present Club Official, and at that stage a general announcement may be made over the public address system.

Depending on the ferocity of the fire it may be necessary to abandon the game and evacuate the Ground.

1.3. Clubhouse- This facility is currently being renovated and not currently accessible to the public or club officials. In the event of a fire in the Disused Clubhouse, the following steps will be taken: As soon as any alert of a fire is raised the emergency services should be called. A Steward or Club Official will ensure that all personnel are evacuated from the area and any spectators in the vicinity of the Disused Clubhouse will also be cleared and asked to assemble at a safe distance from the area. Responsibility for contacting the Fire Service rests with the Club Safety Officer or most senior present Club Official. No-one will be allowed back into the Changing

Rooms without the approval of the Club Safety Officer or the most senior Club Official present, and at that stage a general announcement may be made over the public address system.

Depending on the ferocity of the fire it may be necessary to abandon the game and evacuate the Ground. See section 8 of this document for details on emergency evacuation.

1.4. Whitletts Activity Centre - in the event of a fire in the Activity Centre, the following steps will be taken: As soon as any alert of a fire is raised the emergency services should be called. A Steward or Club Official or staff member of South Ayrshire Council who will ensure that all personnel are evacuated from the Activity Centre. Staff in the Catering Facility and any spectators in the vicinity of the Activity Centre will also be cleared and asked to assemble at a safe distance from the area. Responsibility for contacting the Fire Service rests with the staff member of South Ayrshire Council, Club Safety Officer or most senior present Club Official. No-one will be allowed back into the Activity Centre without the approval of South Ayrshire Council, the Club Safety Officer or the most senior Club Official present, and at that stage a general announcement may be made over the public address system.

Depending on the ferocity of the fire it may be necessary to abandon the game and evacuate the Ground. See section 8 of this document for details on emergency evacuation.

2. Damage to Structures

Upon notification of any structural damage or defect in the Ground the Safety Officer or most senior present Cub Official will:-

2.1. If the Ground has not yet been opened for the admission of spectators:-

- Inspect the damage with the Club Safety Officer, Stadium Manager or any other suitable Club Official and assess the risk to safety
- If appropriate arrange for repairs to be carried out, or for the Council to be informed (if it is an area of their responsibility)
- Depending on the risk the area effected will need to be cordoned off, or the ground closed to public access
- Determine whether the next scheduled fixture can continue

2.2. If the Stadium has been opened and spectators admitted:-

- Inspect the damage with the Club Safety Officer, Stadium Manager or any other suitable Club Official and assess the risk to safety
- If the damage/defect is causing or is likely to cause a threat to spectators safety the area will need to be evacuated, and spectators directed to a safe area of the ground
- Cordon off the area using Stewards to ensure no one enters the area of danger
- If appropriate arrange for repairs to be carried out, Determine whether the fixture can continue, and if required order an emergency evacuation, see section 8 of this document

3. Power Cut or Failure

3.1. There are no emergency power supplies for the buildings within the Ground.

3.2. The Safety Officer, or most senior present Club Official, should contact SP Energy Networks to report the fault on telephone number 0800 092 9290. A list of all emergency telephone numbers will be held in the Social Club.

4. Gas release or Chemical Incident

4.1. In the event of anyone suspecting a gas release, or any other chemical release, they should immediately contact the Club Safety Officer or any other available Club Official.

4.2. In the event of such an alert being raised the Safety officer, or senior present Club Official will:-

- Contact the Fire Brigade on 999 giving them details of the location and nature of the issue
- Contact the National Grid emergency number on 0800 111 999
- Direct a Steward to meet the Fire Brigade at the entrance to the car park.
- Advise the Stewards in the area that all naked flames in the area are to be extinguished, and to open all available doors and windows
- Advise spectators in the affected area via the public address system to extinguish cigarettes and not to use a naked flame from any source

4.3. In consultation with the Fire Officer the Club Safety Officer, or most senior present Club Official, the following action or decisions will be taken:-

- Part or full evacuation of the affected areas
- Whatever the extent of the evacuation the affected area will be cordoned off by stewards
- Personnel will not be allowed to return to the affected areas until the Fire Brigade or Gas company gives the permission to do so
- If the game has not yet kicked off, whether it should go ahead. If the game is underway, whether it should be abandoned or delayed.

5. Crowd Surge or Crush

5.1. If a situation arises involving unruly crowd behaviour which may lead to surging or crushing, the Stewards, assisted by Club Officials will attempt to resolve the situation. If it is clear that this is impossible, the Police will be notified immediately by the Safety Officer or senior present Club Official.

5.2. The Safety Officer or senior present Club Official will also alert the Clubs First Aid staff that their assistance may be required, and if necessary call the Ambulance service on 999.

5.3. The public address system should be used to direct people away from the area and keep them updated on the situation.

5.4. Depending on the seriousness of the event the Safety Officer or senior present Club Official will consider abandoning the game and invoking emergency evacuation procedures. See section 8 of this document for details on emergency evacuation.

6. Pitch Incursion

6.1. If a situation arises involving a pitch incursion, the Stewards, assisted by club Officials will attempt to resolve the situation. If it is clear that this is impossible, the Police will be notified immediately by the Safety Officer or senior present Club Official.

6.2. All available Stewards will be deployed to the area to prevent or limit additional numbers of spectators gaining access to the pitch. Stewards will also attempt to prevent any breaches or confrontation between rival fans.

6.3. The public address system will be used for issuing warning messages or advising spectators to clear the pitch area.

6.4. If a considerable number of spectators have intruded onto the pitch during play the game may be stopped. At that stage the Safety Officer or senior present Club Official should consult with the Police (if they are present) and match referee and make a decision on abandoning the fixture.

7. Disorder within the Ground

7.1. If a situation arises involving disorder within the ground, the Stewards, assisted by Club Officials will attempt to resolve the situation. If this is impossible, the Police will be notified immediately by the Safety Officer or most senior present Club Official.

7.2. All available Stewards will be deployed to the area to try to contain the situation and prevent further disorder escalating, either from additional people getting involved, or allowing the situation to spread to other areas of the ground. Stewards will also attempt to prevent any breaches or confrontation between rival fans.

7.3. The public address system will be used for issuing warning messages or advising spectators to clear any area where any disorder is taking place, until such time as the issue is resolved.

7.4. If a considerable number of spectators are involved in any disorder occurrences during play the game may have to be stopped. At that stage the Safety Officer or most senior present Club Official should consult with the Police (if they are present) and match referee and make a decision on abandoning the fixture.

7.5. If a significant disorder event takes place it may be necessary to inform the occupants of the Activity Centre.

8. Emergency Evacuation

8.1. If an emergency evacuation of the ground is required, Stewards will ensure that spectators leave the ground safely by the nearest available exit. In such evacuations Stewards will ensure all spectators with disabilities make a safe exit from the ground, offering assistance as required.

8.2. Exits to be used will be via the gates at the main entrance/exit.

8.3. The Club Safety Officer or most senior present Club Official will make the decision if an evacuation is necessary, and if appropriate will also inform the emergency services.

8.4. If an announcement is made to evacuate the ground it will be broadcast over the public address system as follows:

“An emergency situation has arisen in the ground. Please leave the ground immediately, in an orderly manner by the nearest available exit. Please be considerate of spectators with disabilities or people with other visible impairments.”

8.5. If only a specific exit can be used for evacuation, the announcement will make reference to the appropriate exit/gate to be used. In such instances the announcement will be as follows:

“An emergency situation has arisen in the ground. Please leave the ground immediately, in an orderly manner by the exits at the [end of the ground] or main exit to the Activity Centre Car Park. Please be considerate of spectators with disabilities or people with other visible impairments.”

8.6. Stewards will be placed at gates to stop people re-entering the Stadium, and to direct Emergency Services as necessary.

8.7. Players and Officials will be instructed by the Safety Officer or most senior present Club Official to congregate in the centre circle until the situation can be assessed to see if it is safe to return to the dressing rooms. If not, they will leave the ground at an appropriate exit.

8.8. Once the Stadium has been evacuated the Safety Officer or most senior present Club Official will carry out a stadium inspection to ensure that it has been totally evacuated. The inspection will be conducted by at least two persons and if appropriated they will be accompanied by the Fire Brigade.

9. Adverse Weather

9.1 Extremes of weather such as wind, rain, snow, ice, fog or heat wave may affect spectator safety both inside the Ground and on ingress/egress routes. Where such extremes of weather are forecast, the Safety Officer or most senior present Club Official shall:

- Check the website of the meteorological office for update of weather conditions
- Consider in the light of all available information, to contact the Competition Secretary to determine whether the fixture should proceed
- Should the fixture be under way and adverse weather affects either the event or the safety of spectators the abandonment of the game and emergency evacuation of the stadium will be considered. The match referee will normally have input in such circumstances
- Spectators will be given advice and informed of any decisions over the public address system.

If a match is cancelled prior to kick-off due to adverse weather, please refer to section 12 of this document.

10. Late Arrivals

10.1. Should information be received that large numbers of spectators are expected to arrive at the ground close to or after the scheduled kick off/start time the Safety Officer or most senior present Club Official will liaise with the Club Secretary and Referee regarding the possibility of delaying the kick off (start) time. The ultimate decision on this rests with the Safety Officer or most senior present Club Official and the match referee.

10.2. If appropriate a revised time mutually agreed between the Match Officials, Team Managers and both Clubs will be set as soon as the estimated arrival of the latecomers is known.

10.3. If the kick off time is delayed, the Safety Officer will advise spectators inside and outside the Stadium via the public address system.

10.4 If kick off time is delayed the Safety Officer will consider broadcasting the details of the delay by:

- Posting a notice on the club website and other social media.
- Contacting local Radio Stations if required.

10.5. The Safety Officer will ensure the entrance gates are kept open to allow speedy ingress to the Stadium. In this respect he/she will continue to liaise with the Stewards to keep them abreast of the situation.

11. Delayed Start

11.1. If for any reason the start of a match is to be delayed, the spectators will be kept informed of the situation over the public address system or by Club Officials and Stewards as appropriate.

12. Match Abandonment

12.1. Where any fixture/event is cancelled before spectators are admitted to the Stadium, the Club Secretary will ensure everyone listed as follows are informed:

- West of Scotland Football League Fixture Secretary
- Visiting Club
- Match Officials – Referee and Assistants
- Club Website and Social Media
- Any other relevant media outlet, including local radio stations.

12.2. If appropriate every effort will be made to contact the visiting Club (team) and request them to use their social media to advise cancellation of the game for their own supporters.

12.3. If spectators have already been admitted when the decision to abandon the fixture is made, the Safety Officer or most senior present Club Official will ensure all entrances are immediately opened and Stewards informed of the decision.

12.4 The Safety Officer or most senior present Club Official will advise spectators inside and outside the Stadium of the situation by use of the public address system and request them to leave via the normal exit routes.

12.5. If a fixture is abandoned before kick-off a voucher\ticket will be offered to all admitted paying spectators allowing free entrance to the rearranged fixture. For any fixture abandoned before or after half-time, then no such arrangement will apply. The admission price for a rearranged fixture will be determined under West of Scotland Football League rules or other such arrangement.

12.6. For league games season ticket holders will be unaffected, since their season ticket will be valid for the rearranged game. The use of season tickets is not appropriate for any Cup games.

13. Document Control

Mandatory Review Date (To be reviewed as required and published annually).

Reviewed: 16th July 2025

Next Review Date: 15th July 2026

Appendix A – Risk Assessment

Area of Risk	Probability	Impact	Rating	Notes
Fire: Modular Building	Low	Medium	3	
Fire: Catering Facility	Low	Medium	3	
Fire: Clubhouse	Medium	Low	2	Old Electrics in situ. Building currently empty
Fire: Activity Centre	Low	High	4	South Ayrshire Council facility Spectator safety
Damage to Structure	Low	Medium	3	Structures are basic in design
Power Failure	Low	Medium	3	Evacuation of spectators in darkness
Gas/Chemical Incident	Low	High	4	Major impact on safety
Public Address Failure	Low	Low	2	Portable facility currently used
Crowd Surge (normal fixture)	Low	Low	2	No concern for normal fixtures
Crowd Surge (key fixture)	Medium	Medium	4	Concern for orderly evacuation
Pitch Invasion	Low	Medium	4	Prevent spread of invasion and evacuation
Emergency Evacuation	Low	Medium	4	Concern for orderly evacuation
Adverse Weather	Medium	Low	3	Structural Damage to Clubhouse or Activity Centre due to high winds
Late Arrivals	Low	Low	2	No concern for normal fixtures
Match Abandonment	Low	Low	2	Depending on fixture and reason for abandonment

Note- for crowd surge, pitch invasion, emergency evacuation, late arrivals and match abandonment, the rating is 2 for normal matches and would be 6 for a major match with in excess of 500 spectators.

Document Control

Mandatory Review Date (To be reviewed and published annually).

Reviewed on: 16th July 2026

Next review date: 15th July 2026