

If years were minutes, Beacon Hill Rovers FC would now be playing in injury time. 90 minutes are up, but the club is still at it like Man U chasing a late winner. Just like the first men's team did when they kicked-off in 1921, now 16 (sixteen) teams don the club's black and white. 11 men then has grown to over 250 players now; girls, boys, men and women. This season a new men's team joins the ranks, and with them comes a new ground - the Sunday side and the Jubilee Recreation Ground (aka 'Pit') are great additions. The committee has signed some fresh talents: Richie Phillibrown as Reserve Team Manager, Wayne Purser as Sunday Team Manager, Gordon Henrici as U7 Team Manager, Nikki Smith as Social Secretary along with Rob Smith and Toby Legg as Players' Reps, while David Park becomes Vice-Chair. There's also a new First Team sponsor (Walters and Tufnell), new leagues, new match formats and new social events planned. All this added to the great stuff we already do - from coaching in schools to training Soccability, developing young players to winning adult trophies and much more besides. With the club looking to develop even further over the next few years, Beacon Hill are looking good going into extra-time. Here's how the adult teams shape up:

While on paper the Mid-Essex Premier Division looks like a tougher test than last year, the **First Team** and their new manager Steve Carter, will be looking to improve on last season's 8th place. Cup quarter-finals proved a stumbling block for this team last season, so a run in one of the main cup competitions will be an aim. Pre-season games have shown promise with notable performances from some of the younger players. Saturday sees them kick-off their league campaign at newly promoted SFC Billericay (formerly Scotia Billericay Reserves) which may prove an early indication of the challenge for the season.

After a good league performance last time out, the **Reserves** were unfortunate to miss out on promotion to Mid-Essex Division 2 by one place. Frustrating though that was, last year's third place in Division 3 is understood to be the best Reserve Team finish in their history. Under their new manager, Richie

Phillibrown, they'll be hoping to go one step further this year. Shelley Royals are their first league test at home on Saturday. Phillibrown's men can expect a tough match from a side who played in Division 2 last year.

Finishing in the top half of Mid-Essex Division 4 (as the highest placed 'A' team in the Mid-Essex league), the **Third Team** achieved its highest ever final league position last year. Bizarrely, they were victims of a league restructure and now find themselves playing in Division 5 (due to an increase in the number of divisions overall). But as one of the strongest teams in their Division they'll be aiming high in the league and looking for an extended cup run. Pre-season has seen some impressive performances, most notably a 3-1 win over a good Old Bramstonians side, with the younger players starting to shine through. A positive start is a must in their first league game against the newly promoted 'A' team of St. Clere's at home on Saturday.

The Vets don't start their season proper until next Saturday, but a bid for promotion from Division 1 is on the cards after just missing out in the last game of last season. A squad strengthened over the summer and a couple of promising pre-season outings means that they will look to hit the ground running this year.

Though new to the Beacon fold, the **Sunday Social** side won't be looking to stay in the baby seat for long. Expect a push for Braintree & North Essex Sunday League Division 2 and a cup run from this lively group of players. Already showing some form pre-season, their opener is on Sunday morning against CFC Shalford Reserves at home.

The Ladies achieved notable success last season as they maintained their place in the Essex County Women's League Premier Division – the highest standard of any of our teams. With some new additions to the talented core of the team, Beacon look like a side capable of making a serious challenge this year. Their win over East Thurrock United from the Eastern Regional League at the Essex FA tournament in pre-season has shown what they're capable of and they'll be looking to their first game against FC Clacton at home on Sunday as a chance to get things rolling. □