

= Graham Westley =

Graham Neil Westley (born 4 March 1968) is an English former professional footballer who was most recently manager of Peterborough United .

Westley started his managerial career at the age of 28 , managing Kingstonian for five months , before spending a year in charge of Enfield . In 1999 , Westley became manager of Farnborough Town , guiding them to the Football Conference in 2002 . He left Farnborough the following season , to become manager of Stevenage . He took the club to within one game of promotion to the Football League , but left the club in 2006 when his contract expired . Westley then had a brief , but successful , spell with Rushden & Diamonds , as well as acting as caretaker manager at Kettering Town . He took a year out of the game , before rejoining Stevenage in May 2008 . He guided the club to FA Trophy success in 2009 , before securing promotion to the Football League for the first time in the club 's history in April 2010 , finishing the season as league champions . Westley guided the club to back @-@ to @-@ back promotions in his first season as a Football League manager , following Stevenage 's successful 2010 ? 11 League Two play @-@ off campaign . At the start of 2012 , Westley left Stevenage to join Preston North End . He was sacked by the club in February 2013 . A month later , Westley rejoined Stevenage , his third spell at the club .

= = Playing career = =

Westley was born in Hounslow , London and he started his footballing career as an apprentice with Queens Park Rangers . During his time at QPR , Westley represented England at U18 level . He then joined Gillingham in March 1986 . He made two league appearances for the club before joining Barnet . He made three appearances and scored one goal for them in the Football Conference during the 1987 ? 88 season , making his debut for the club in a 2 ? 2 draw against Macclesfield Town at Moss Rose . Westley joined Wycombe Wanderers in the latter stages of 1987 for a fee of £ 7 @, @ 500 , making a scoring debut in a 2 ? 1 away victory at Telford United . He scored in Wycombe 's next two games , and was a first @-@ team regular until manager Peter Suddaby left the club in January 1988 . Westley played just once under new manager Jim Kelman and left soon afterwards to sign for Kingstonian . He played 24 times for Wycombe , scoring five goals in all competitions during the club 's 1987 ? 88 campaign . He later played for a number of non @-@ League clubs , including Kingstonian , Wealdstone , Farnborough Town , Harlow Town , Enfield , Aylesbury United , Harrow Borough , Tooting & Mitcham United , Molesey and Walton & Hersham ? three of which he would later go on to manage . During his time at Kingstonian , he suffered a dislocated ankle and broken leg in three places , which subsequently cut his playing career short after never fully recovering from the injury . On his playing career , Westley said " I felt sorry for myself too often when I should have been leading the team " .

= = Managerial career = =

= = = Early management = = =

While recovering from a broken leg , at the age of 28 , Westley was appointed as manager of Kingstonian in December 1996 after approaching the club about their vacant managerial post . His first two games in @-@ charge of the club both ended in 4 ? 4 draws against Walton & Hersham and Harrow Borough respectively , with Westley saying " at the time , there was something raw and exciting about the team that I sent out . Although there was also something evidently missing " . His first victory in @-@ charge of the club was a 2 ? 0 win over Wokingham Town in the Isthmian League Cup , before securing his first league win in the following game , a 5 ? 2 win away at Aylesbury United . Kingstonian drew clear of relegation , with Westley recalling a 3 ? 2 victory over champions Yeovil Town at Huish Park as a " memorable victory " . Despite securing safety for the club , he was sacked after just five months , being replaced by Geoff Chapple . He managed

Kingstonian for 25 games recording nine wins , eight losses , and eight draws .

In September 1997 , Westley was appointed as manager of another club he had previously played for in the form of Isthmian League Premier Division outfit Enfield . He appointed Graham Pearce as his assistant , who had also previously played for , and managed , Enfield . He outlined his ambition of ensuring the club returned to the top tier in non @-@ league , despite a host of financial difficulties at the club , he stated " my ambition is to see silverware in the table , and if you can 't take the pressure , you shouldn 't take big jobs like this one " . His first game as manager of Enfield was a 2 ? 0 home defeat to St Albans City . Despite securing a seventh @-@ placed finish for the club , Westley left the club after just nine months in charge . He managed the club for a total of 41 games ; winning 19 , losing 16 , and drawing 6 ? with a win percentage of 46 @.@ 34 % .

= = = Farnborough Town = = =

In 1999 , Westley bought a controlling interest in Farnborough Town and appointed himself as manager . He managed the club to a 12th @-@ place finish in his first season in charge , but enjoyed success in the Isthmian Cup ; winning the competition in 2000 . The following season , Westley guided the club to more success , winning the Isthmian League Premier Division ; securing 31 victories out of a possible 42 and amassing a total of 99 points . Westley overhauled the squad shortly after the club 's promotion to the Football Conference ? something which he now states as a " huge regret " . At this point , he also tried to arrange a merger with Kingstonian ? citing the club 's " Football League rated ground " as the reasoning behind his proposed idea , although it never happened due to " fans resistance " . During the 2001 ? 02 season , the club consolidated their position in the first tier of non ? league football ; with Westley guiding the club to a 7th @-@ place finish in the league . The following season was to be a memorable campaign for Westley , reaching the Third Round of the FA Cup after a 3 ? 0 victory at Southport , where they faced Football League competition in the form of Darlington at Feethams . Westley guided the side to a 3 ? 2 win over Darlington , and the club were rewarded with a Fourth Round tie at home to Arsenal . The tie , however , was controversially moved to Highbury ? because the tie stood to make around £ 600 @,@ 000 in gate receipts from playing at Highbury , whereas playing at Cherrywood Road would only have generated the club an estimated £ 50 @,@ 000 . Westley left the club after the sell @-@ out ' home ' tie at Highbury , which they lost 5 ? 1 . Shortly after his resignation , he became manager at Football Conference rivals Stevenage in January 2003 , signing a three @-@ year contract . Westley confirmed he would be leaving his shareholding in Farnborough to other existing shareholders , and would also be withdrawing his financial backing at the club . On moving to Stevenage , Westley said " I 've enjoyed my time at Farnborough , but I feel that I need to move on now and that I need to concentrate on football management , which is where my ambitions lie " . He went on to state that Stevenage 's " long @-@ term potential " was another key factor behind the move .

= = = Stevenage = = =

When Westley took over the Hertfordshire club , Stevenage were sitting 21st in the Football Conference , and were six points adrift of safety . Unlike his position at his previous club , Westley was appointed as first @-@ team manager , with no board involvement . He set about ensuring the club were still in the highest tier in non @-@ league football , signing seven players from his previous club Farnborough , as well as his former assistant Graham Pearce and goalkeeping coach Graham Benstead . His first game in charge of the club was a 1 ? 1 draw at home to Morecambe , before having to wait three games for his first win at the club ? a 2 ? 0 victory away at local rivals Barnet , thanks to a Dino Maamria brace . The victory sparked an eight @-@ game unbeaten run , recording six victories on the bounce to ensure the club were safe from relegation . Westley had guided the club from 21st in the table to a respectable 12th @-@ place finish by the end of the season . The 2003 ? 04 season witnessed a much more consistent season under Westley 's management , but the club were unable to make the play @-@ offs and finished the campaign in 8th

place , despite a positive start to the season .

As was the case in previous seasons , Westley made wholesale changes at the end of the season , releasing several of the players he had originally signed from Farnborough , and replacing them with a mixture of players with Football League experience ? in the form of Brian Quailey , Dannie Bulman , and Matt Hocking ? as well as players from lower divisions such as Jon Nurse and Craig McAllister . Westley also gave first @-@ team opportunities to players who had progressed through the club 's youth system , most notably George Boyd . The squad originally struggled to perform , losing five games in the first eight games of the club 's league campaign . However , two victories by wide margins against lowly opposition in the form of Farnborough and Northwich Victoria respectively propelled the club into a mid @-@ table position . However , this was followed by two heavy defeats at the hands of York City and Canvey Island ? the latter a 4 ? 1 home defeat against part @-@ time opposition . After the game , with hundreds of Stevenage fans calling for Westley to be sacked , he confronted fans in the East Terrace by saying he " would turn it around " . Westley 's side responded with four straight wins , and stayed within touching distance of the play @-@ offs for several months . An important double over Carlisle United in March 2005 , as well as crucial wins at Aldershot Town , Woking , and Crawley Town meant that Stevenage went into the final day of the season needing to beat already relegated Leigh RMI , and had to rely on Tamworth to hold Morecambe , who were currently occupying the final play @-@ off spot . Stevenage beat Leigh 2 ? 0 , while Tamworth held Morecambe to a goalless draw , ultimately meaning Westley 's side had reached the play @-@ offs on the final day of the season . Westley engineered two solid displays to ensure Stevenage overcame second @-@ placed Hereford United 2 ? 1 on aggregate , but lost 1 ? 0 to Carlisle United at the Britannia Stadium in the final .

The 2005 ? 06 season marked Westley 's third season in charge as manager of the club , and although the club were consistent at Broadhall Way throughout the season , the side struggled for form away from home , winning just four games on the road all season . Stevenage 's poor away form was ultimately preventing the club from mounting any serious title challenge , and throughout the campaign Westley 's side would often " lose the game before it began " ? in away games against Southport , Morecambe , and Burton Albion respectively , Westley 's side trailed 3 ? 0 before half @-@ time . Westley had also fallen out with striker Anthony Elding , who was eventually sold to Kettering Town in January 2006 . There were also increasingly frequent question marks surrounding the discipline of the squad under Westley 's control , as Stevenage received fourteen red cards during the campaign , more than any other club in the league by some distance . A 2 ? 0 defeat away to relegation @-@ threatened Forest Green Rovers on the final day of the season meant that Stevenage failed to reach the play @-@ offs , finishing 6th in the table . After failing to reach the play @-@ offs , Westley confirmed in May 2006 that he would leave the club when his contract expired in June , ending his three and a half year tenure with the Hertfordshire club .

= = = Rushden & Diamonds = = =

He was appointed manager of Rushden & Diamonds in December 2006 , with the club sitting 22nd in the table , two points adrift of safety . Westley 's first game in charge of Rushden was a 1 ? 0 victory away at Cambridge United , as he set about ensuring safety . Westley secured the signatures of several players who he had previously managed at Stevenage ; signing the likes of Jamie Cook , David Perpetuini , and Dino Maamria . Westley also brought in the likes of Michael Bostwick and Chris Beardsley ? younger players who he had previously written about in his weekly column in The Non @-@ League Paper when he was out of work . Westley 's newly assembled team secured five straight wins in the league , including wins away at the top two teams in the league at the time , Oxford United and Dagenham & Redbridge . Despite managing an upturn in the form of the club , Westley was surprisingly sacked after a 2 ? 2 draw at Aldershot Town in February 2007 . He had taken the club from 22nd in the league to 12th in the space of two and a half months , and the club were on a seven @-@ match unbeaten run at the time . In all , he managed Rushden for 13 games ; winning seven , drawing three and losing three . The reason behind Westley 's sacking is unknown , but he was replaced two days later by Garry Hill .

= = = Kettering Town = = =

Shortly after leaving Rushden , Westley was appointed caretaker manager of Conference North outfit Kettering Town for the rest of the 2006 ? 07 season in April 2007 . Due to the date he joined , Westley was unable to bring any new players in to bolster the squad , with just two games remaining until the end of the season . His first game in charge was a 0 ? 0 draw away to Stalybridge Celtic , shortly followed by a 1 ? 0 loss to Alfreton Town at Rockingham Road ? this was enough to ensure Kettering finished the season in second place . He managed Kettering in the play @-@ offs , as they were beaten on penalties by Farsley Celtic in the semi @-@ final after a 1 ? 1 aggregate scoreline over two legs , he left shortly after when his short @-@ term contract expired in May 2007 , managing the club for a total of four games .

= = = Return to Stevenage = = =

After almost a year without work in football , Westley returned as Stevenage manager in May 2008 ? two years after he had originally left . On his return , Westley stated he had come to " finish the job he started " ? referring to trying to guide the club into the Football League for the first time in its history . He said that " the moment was right " for him to come back into football and that he " had some very good times at Stevenage before " . His appointment was met with a fair bit of scepticism by Stevenage fans , but Westley promised to deliver a winning team , playing attractive football . Westley started by completely overhauling the squad in the summer transfer window and brought in no fewer than twelve players in an attempt to mount a serious Conference Premier title challenge . Among those brought in were Gary Mills and David Bridges , who Westley had managed during his short @-@ stint at Kettering . He also signed Michael Bostwick and Mark Albrighton , who he had also signed at Rushden & Diamonds . Westley also secured the signatures of Andy Drury and Eddie Odhiambo respectively , both of which were players Westley had previously earmarked .

Stevenage started the season poorly , losing 3 out of their first 4 games and conceding 13 goals in the process , including a 5 ? 0 loss to Wrexham on the first day of the season . The club secured its first victory under Westley in late August 2008 , a 3 ? 1 win away at Barrow , before winning four games on the bounce in September . However , through the first half of the club 's 2008 ? 09 campaign , Westley 's side were suffering from the same inconsistency that was common in his first spell as manager of the Hertfordshire side , losing three games on the trot in November ? the last of which was a 2 ? 1 home defeat to Wrexham , it was to be Stevenage 's last defeat at Broadhall Way in the league for 18 months . Westley brought in former player , Dino Maamria as first @-@ team coach at the club . This , coupled with important signings during the campaign , such as Chris Day , Mark Roberts , and Jon Ashton , meant that Stevenage witnessed an up @-@ turn in form half way through the campaign . A 24 @-@ game unbeaten run stretching from December 2008 to April 2009 , as well as winning crucial games towards the latter stages of the season , ultimately meant that Westley 's men made the Conference Premier play @-@ offs , finishing in the last play @-@ off place . Despite taking a 3 ? 1 lead into the second leg , Stevenage lost 4 ? 3 overall on aggregate to Cambridge United . Westley did , however , enjoy success in the FA Trophy when he led the side out at Wembley Stadium in front of 27 @,@ 102 as Stevenage beat York City 2 ? 0 in the Final . The win was Westley 's first taste of success as manager of Stevenage . After the game , it was announced that Westley was to stay on as manager for another year .

The majority of the squad that performed so well in the second half of the club 's 2008 ? 09 campaign were retained , with very little transfer activity in comparison to previous seasons under Westley . Steve Morison , the club 's top goalscorer for the past three seasons , moved to Millwall for a fee of £ 130 @,@ 000 , while both John Martin and Calum Willock were released by Westley in late May 2009 . Midfielder Gary Mills was the last departure of the close season ; rejecting a contract and instead opting to join fellow Conference Premier rivals Mansfield Town . Five players joined the club during the close season . Charlie Griffin was the first signing of the season , joining Stevenage from Salisbury City on a free transfer . Yemi Odubade , Chris Beardsley , and Joel

Byrom signed for the club shortly after ; the latter commanding a transfer fee of £ 15 @, @ 000 . Westley had previously managed Beardsley at Rushden & Diamonds and Kettering Town . The last signing of pre @-@ season was Stacy Long ; who joined the club on a free transfer from Ebbsfleet United . No players departed the club during the season , with Tim Sills the only addition ? signing for an undisclosed fee from Torquay United in January 2010 .

Stevenage 's league campaign got off to a typically patchy start ; with the side recording just one win from their first five games of the season . Following a 2 ? 1 defeat to Oxford United in August 2009 , the team went on a 17 @-@ game unbeaten run that stretched four months from August to December 2009 , propelling the club into the top two . Unlike in previous seasons , the club were performing strongly away from home , and secured victories at the likes of Luton Town and Mansfield Town . A 4 ? 1 victory against Cambridge United on New Year 's Day ultimately meant that Stevenage hit top @-@ spot for the first time in the season . However , two defeats on the road within the space of a week in February meant that rivals Oxford United had an eight ? point lead going into March 2010 . The team responded well , winning eight games on the bounce ; including an important 1 ? 0 victory over Oxford United in late March , subsequently replacing Oxford at the top of the table . Borough brushed aside a late challenge from Luton Town , securing promotion to the Football League with two games to spare following a 2 ? 0 win against Kidderminster Harriers at Aggborough . The team won their last six games of the league campaign without conceding a single goal , and recorded 42 points from a possible 45 from their last 15 league fixtures . Stevenage finished the season having amassed a total of 99 points from 44 games , winning the league by 11 points , with Westley winning many plaudits for the way he had secured promotion despite considerably less resources than a lot of the teams in the division . The promotion means Westley has led Stevenage to the Football League for the first time in their history , as well as managing a Football League team for the first time in his managerial career . Westley also guided the club to another FA Trophy Final ; this time losing 2 ? 1 after extra @-@ time against Barrow at Wembley Stadium . At the end of the season , Westley signed a new two @-@ year contract ; keeping him contracted to the club until 2012 . On signing the new deal , Westley said " I am grateful for all the support that we have all been given in the past two years . I am delighted to have the opportunity to manage the launch of the club into the Football League " . In his first two seasons back at the club , from May 2008 to May 2010 , Westley has been in charge for 114 games , winning a total of 70 games ? recording a win percentage of 61 @. @ 40 % .

Similarly to the club 's successful campaign the season before , but in complete contrast to his first tenure at the club , the 2010 ? 11 season saw five players joining the club , while roughly five players left the club in the close season . The club started the season inconsistently , with Westley stating the season would be a " massive learning curve " for both himself and the players . Following four defeats in six games in December 2010 and January 2011 , Stevenage found themselves in 18th position , just four points above the relegation zone . However , during a congested period throughout February and March 2011 , Stevenage won nine games out of eleven , propelling the club up the league table and into the play @-@ off positions . This included winning six games on the trot , a sequence only matched by Bury . A 3 ? 3 draw against Bury on the final day of the season meant that Stevenage finished the season in sixth place . They faced fifth place Accrington Stanley in the 2010 ? 11 League Two play @-@ off semi @-@ finals , winning both legs by a 3 ? 0 aggregate scoreline . They beat Torquay United 1 ? 0 in the Final at Old Trafford on 28 May 2011 . The victory meant that Westley had guided the club to back @-@ to @-@ back promotions , playing in League One for the first time in the club 's history . On securing promotion , Westley said " It 's a fantastic feeling . The players work so hard and they deserve everything they get " . During the 2010 ? 11 season , Westley also guided the club to the Fourth Round of the FA Cup , where they lost to Reading 2 ? 1 . In the previous round , Stevenage beat Premier League side Newcastle United 3 ? 1 at Broadhall Way . After the match , Westley said before the game he had told the players to " go out and win the match 5 ? 0 . We established that if we did just 20 % of what it would take to win 5 ? 0 then we would still win the game " .

At the start of the 2011 ? 12 season , Westley signed a three @-@ year contract extension at Stevenage that kept him contracted to the club until 2014 . Westley acquired five players on free

transfers , while also releasing five of the existing squad . Stevenage started their first ever League One campaign well , beating the 2010 ? 11 League One play @-@ off semi @-@ finalists , Bournemouth , 3 ? 1 at Dean Court to secure their first victory of the season on 16 August 2011 . Stevenage were exceeding expectations in the third tier of English football , sitting just outside the play @-@ off places after securing a notable 5 ? 1 victory against Sheffield Wednesday Broadhall Way in September 2011 . The club also inflicted Charlton Athletic 's first league defeat of the season after a 1 ? 0 win against the league leaders . The victory against Charlton was to spark a 13 @-@ game unbeaten run for Westley 's Stevenage , and a 6 ? 1 away victory at Colchester United on Boxing Day 2011 meant the club were sat in sixth place , the final play @-@ off position . After managing Stevenage for three @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half years , Westley left Stevenage in January 2012 , joining fellow League One side Preston North End . His final game as manager of Stevenage was a 1 ? 0 away victory at Reading in the FA Cup Third Round .

= = = Preston North End = = =

In January 2012 , Preston North End asked for permission to speak to Westley with the view to employing him as their new manager . Though the Hertfordshire club described the approach as " unwelcome " , permission was granted . After personal terms and a compensation package were agreed , Westley was announced as Preston 's new manager on 13 January . His first game in @-@ charge of the club was a 2 ? 0 home defeat against Leyton Orient on 21 January . After the game , it was revealed that Westley had told players the starting line @-@ up for the game courtesy of a 2am text message on the day of the match . He picked up his first win as Preston manager in his fourth game in @-@ charge , securing a 1 ? 0 home victory over Hartlepool United on 14 February 2012 . Following Preston 's 2 ? 0 televised defeat to Sheffield Wednesday in March 2012 , Westley stated that a Sheffield Wednesday player had informed him that four Preston players had leaked the Preston team and tactics to opposition players ahead of the match . Westley stated ? " It doesn 't surprise me . When you have got people in your own camp working against you it is tough " . Preston won just two games out of the next 17 during the remainder of the campaign , and finished the season in 15th place . At the end of the season , Westley criticised the club 's " mediocre " mentality , stating the squad have " not got a clue what it takes to get success " .

Westley subsequently went about overhauling the squad ahead of the 2012 ? 13 season . In May 2012 , Preston announced that 21 players would be leaving the club ; 14 of which were released at the end of their contracts , while a further seven were transfer @-@ listed . Preston signed 18 players during the summer transfer window , including Scott Laird , John Mousinho , Joel Byrom , and Chris Beardsley , four players from Westley 's former club , Stevenage . Westley stated a desire for the new group of players to be committed to his ideas ? " My job is to develop a plan that would see the club back on an upward curve . The plan is in place . I 'm looking forward to working with a group that thinks along the same lines that I do " . Preston started the season well , beating Championship side Huddersfield Town 2 ? 0 at Deepdale in the League Cup . Later on in the month , Preston went on to secure consecutive 4 ? 1 home victories , beating Crystal Palace and Swindon Town respectively , as well as defeating Hartlepool United 5 ? 0 a month later . However , the club went on to win just two leagues matches in a four @-@ month period from October 2012 to February 2013 . A day after Preston 's 3 ? 1 away defeat to Yeovil Town on 12 February 2013 , the club released a statement announcing Westley had been sacked . With Preston sitting just five points above the relegation zone , it was revealed that " the board felt that a change of manager was the only way forward " . On his time at Preston , Westley stated he had to " slash the wage bill by 60y percent " , and as a result the " re @-@ building was well underway but the club lost confidence in me whilst I was doing it . They just want results . Short @-@ term pain is necessary sometimes . It was necessary at Preston . And the fans got restless . I get that . Just as managers have to be brave enough to grit their teeth and face up to that , so owners have to be brave at difficult times . And they have to be able to understand the issues . I knew the answers to problems but I wasn 't being allowed to solve all the problems " .

= = = Third spell at Stevenage = = =

After a month out of work , Westley rejoined Stevenage on 30 March 2013 , his third spell in @-@ charge at the club . On the appointment , Stevenage chairman Phil Wallace stated ? " Graham was keen to come back to Stevenage and , although I met some strong candidates , without doubt I think he ? s the best man for the job right now . The club enjoyed a great deal of success before he left last year and we moved forwards significantly in his time here on several levels " . On his return , Westley said ? " I 'm really happy to be back , the training ground is fantastic , the club just keeps moving forward . All the facilities keep improving and I hope that I can come back and make another positive difference " . In his first game back in @-@ charge of the club , Stevenage secured a 1 ? 0 victory over Hartlepool United on 1 April .

On 21 May 2015 , Westley was replaced by ex England striker Teddy Sheringham as manager of Stevenage .

= = = Peterborough United = = =

Westley was appointed manager of League One Peterborough United on 21 September 2015 .

Despite lifting Peterborough into the playoff places in January 2016 , a very poor run of form saw Peterborough slide down the table and Westley was sacked by Peterborough on 23 April after a 2 @-@ 0 home defeat to Scunthorpe United left them 14th in the League One table .

= = Personal life = =

Westley writes a weekly column in The Non @-@ League Paper , sharing his views and experiences on the non @-@ league game . He is also the chief executive of the Aimita Corporation , an organisation that provides performance management consulting . Westley has also gained a Master of Arts degree in company direction .

= = Managerial statistics = =

As of 23 April 2016

= = Honours = =

Farnborough Town

Isthmian League Cup : 2000 ? 01

Isthmian League Premier Division : 2000 ? 01

Stevenage

FA Trophy : 2008 ? 09

Conference Premier : 2009 ? 10

Football League Two play @-@ offs : 2010 ? 11 winners

Individual

Conference Premier Manager of the Month (3) : October 2005 , January 2009 , January 2010