

Together Anything Is Possible

The Cherries, under manager Andoli Iraola, are much admired internationally for their playing style, coaching and entire set-up. The Club strapline says it all.

The Premiership is the toughest league in the world, so how to counter losing key players? The answer: recruit young emerging global talent. Potential is honed at the superb Canford Magna Performance Centre by coaching and backroom teams.



Value-added in player ability is huge. So are sell-on transfer fees. The Cherries aim to qualify for Europe by increasing their talent pool and Vitality Stadium capacity.

The seeds were sown years ago. A copy of *Trailblazers* was presented to Club legend John Williams. “To Willo - celebrating your contribution, on and off the pitch.” Former Bournemouth and Tottenham manager Harry Redknapp said of Willo, “He was a great pro, a great lad to have around the place, just a fantastic character.”

On hanging up his boots, Willo became a coach, community development officer, and Club assistant manager. A superb ambassador, he found a new role as Radio Solent co-commentator and match summariser. Little did Willo know this would be for the next 23 years! He too has played a part in the AFC Bournemouth success story.

Willo's incisive comments helped make sense of action on the pitch. His message is stay upbeat. Last season, playing Everton away, the Cherries won 3-2 with all their goals coming in time added on. Against Tottenham this season they clinched a 3-2 victory in the 95th minute. It was the same score against Liverpool. The winner also came in the same minute!



**“The quickest 23 years
of my life!”**

John (Willo) Williams

Willo’s final match was on 25 May 2025 when they beat Leicester City 2-0 to end in 9th place, their highest ever. It was a very special celebration for the team and Willo.

A Trailblazer Making An Impression

In the late 1850s, an American avant-garde artist came to London via Moscow and Paris. His atmospheric nocturnes in the 1870s ruffled feathers with the staid Royal Academy. So did a tempestuous nature. The artist was James McNeill Whistler.

In 1877, Whistler displayed 8 paintings on the opening of the Grosvenor Gallery in Bond Street. John Ruskin exploded on seeing ‘The ‘Falling Rocket,’ a nocturne in black and gold of a fireworks display in Cremorne Gardens. “I never expected to hear a coxcomb ask two hundred guineas for flinging a pot of paint in the public’s face.”

An outraged Whistler sued Ruskin for libel. A mocking QC asked how long it took to ‘knock it off’ and queried 200 guineas for two days’ work. Whistler replied, “I ask for it for the knowledge I have gained in a lifetime.” *Trailblazers*, took two years and nearly 60 years in management to write. Whistler’s QC might have said - priceless!

A New World Order

Tectonic plates of global society have shifted greatly in politics, economics, security, technology, lifestyles and climate change. This has accelerated at supersonic speed since Donald Trump’s inauguration - and speech at Davos.

Mark Carney’s comment resonates. “If you are not at the table, you are on the menu.” A stunned Europe feels much the same. Darwinian economics means survival of the fittest in a seriously destabilised world. Add to this the maelstrom in Iran. Security in the region is at huge risk and so is quality of life for millions.

Business confidence is at a massive low. Yet, opportunities do exist from educational games to franchising for micro private or social enterprises. Creative ideas aren’t an issue. Nor are design concepts, branding or apps. So what’s the problem? Missing is an entrepreneurial spirit, much in evidence in the USA and Asia also.

The Cherries strapline has it right. So does Willo. A positive mindset is the message of *Trailblazers* too. A quote attributed to Henry Ford sums this up neatly. “Whether you think you can – or whether you think you can’t – you are probably right!”
