

KENT COUNTY RFU INFORMATION SENDOUT JULY/AUG 2018



1. RFU COUNCIL MEMBER FOR KENT CHANGES FROM AUGUST 2018

After 14 years as the Counties representative on the RFU Council and 18 years as the Secretary to the County RFU Mike Cordell has retired from both positions to take up an appointment with his employers based in Gibraltar.

Mike served the RFU on a number of its sub-committees including: Club and CB Development, Education and Governance. In addition he chaired the International Rugby ticket sub-committee, was the RFU representative on the Students RFU and served as a Trustee of the RFU Pension scheme.

For Kent he has been an ever presence at County Championship games and at County finals day as well as visiting county clubs wherever he could. In recognition of his services Kent members at its recent AGM made Mike a Life Vice President of the County and at his last RFU Council meeting in June the RFU Council elected Mike to the position of Privileged RFU Member.

We wish him every success with his new appointment and his move to Gibraltar and will no doubt- with his enthusiasm for all that the County Rugby Union does- see him at a range of activities during 2018-19.

ROGER CLARKE ELECTED RFU COUNCILLOR FOR KENT FROM 1ST AUGUST 2018.



Following Mike's resignation and in accordance with RFU rules the County sought nominations for his replacement in February and having received 2 conducted a County ballot of RFU qualified clubs in March. As a result the current Chairman of the County Executive

Committee Roger Clarke was elected as the counties new RFU councillor from August 1st 2018 to serve for a period of 3 years.

Roger is a member of Tunbridge Wells RFC, sat on a range of County Committees and became the current Chairman of the Executive 7 years ago. During the three year run up to England RWC 2015 he was interviewed and selected to chair Area 3's RWC 2015 Lead up and Legacy Group comprising Sussex, Surrey, Kent and Essex.

Having become the new RFU Councillor in the last few weeks Roger is very keen to represent Kent Clubs in a proactive manner and also hopes to be able to visit member clubs for games against fellow County clubs or Executive Committee meetings where wanted. He will also take an active part in the County insight event to be held on the 26th September at Shepherd Neame in Faversham (see elsewhere in this bulletin).

If your Club has any issues or questions which relate to RFU performance, support, and funding or require a visit on these or other related topics then please either contact the Kent administrator Tracy Pettingale office@kent-rugby.org or Roger direct at rogerclarke@rfu.com

2. PRE-SEASON SAFEGUARDING PREPARATION

Preparing for the new Season

As you get ready for the 2018-19 season, there are a number of things to do to make sure you are ready in terms of Safeguarding. You can download a checklist [HERE](#) that might help you think about what needs doing.

3. SAFEGUARDING REFRESHERS

The start of a season is a great opportunity to remind all those involved with children's and youth Rugby what to do if they are concerned about a child. If you have a coaches' briefing or a start-of-season mailout, this is an ideal way to remind people of the procedure. You can download an example of what you might include [HERE](#).

4. PLAY IT SAFE COURSES

PLAY IT SAFE

Play It Safe is the RFU's basic safeguarding course. It is good practice to have at least one, if not more, coach from each age-group that has done this course. The dates and venues for Kent courses coming up are shown below:

Times 19:00 - 22:00

Weds 12th Sept 2018 - Canterbury RFC

Mon 17th Sept 2018 - Folkestone RFC

Thurs 20th Sept 2018 - Westcombe Park RFC

Mon 24th Sept 2018 - Aylesford Bulls RFC

Mon 19th Sept 2018 - Sevenoaks RFC

Places on courses are booked via the England Rugby Website: <https://www.englandrugby.com/my-rugby/courses/search/>

5. WHATSAPP

Communicating with Youth Players via WhatsApp



Several clubs have been in touch about using WhatsApp to communicate with Youth Players. Firstly, according to the WhatsApp terms and conditions, you have to be at least 16 years old to use the messaging platform. Therefore, this could only be used with U17s and above. If you do go down the route of using this to communicate with 16 and 17 year old players, it's important that you refer to the RFU Social Media Guidance here:

<http://www.englandrugby.com/governance/club-support/promoting-your-club/social-media-for-clubs/>.

You need to ensure that each player and their parents has provided consent to appear on the group as their mobile phone number will be visible. Parents and carers should also be provided with the guidance below: <http://parentinfo.org/article/whatsapp-a-guide-for-parents-and-carers>.

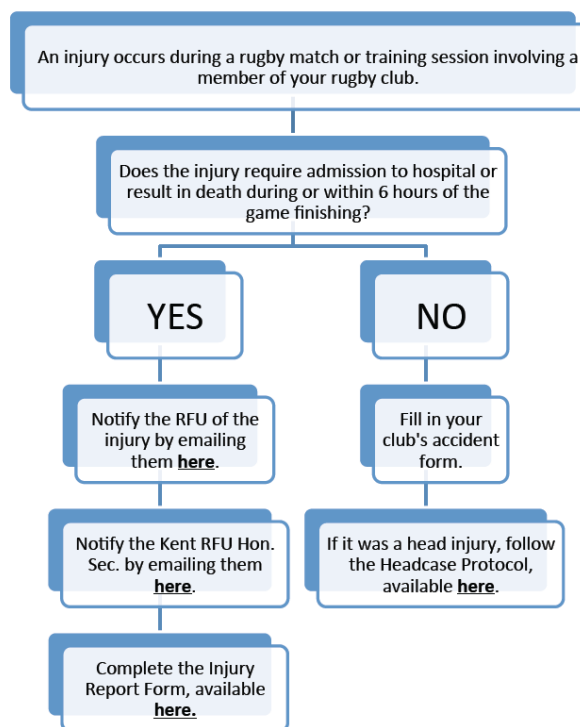
Any misuse of the group must be dealt with promptly. Things to consider include the ease with which inappropriate images can be posted, and the way in which these images can end up in a user's personal photo library, adults making comments that are not suitable for children, and the use of the platform to bully or make inappropriate comments towards an individual.

6. INJURY REPORTING PROTOCOLS

Serious Injury in Rugby is not common but on the rare occasions it happens, Kent RFU wants to be able to support the player and their family and club. To aid this process and ensure that we are aware of injuries that occur during matches or training that necessitate a stay in hospital overnight, we have introduced an Injury Reporting Protocol. Please make sure you share this protocol with whoever coordinates first aid at your club.

You can download the interactive protocol form, [HERE](#).

Below is a simple flow-chart to take you through the process of reporting a serious injury.



Activate – Injury Prevention Exercise Programme

Lots of you might have seen the articles in the news about this programme of warm-up activities that has been shown to reduce injuries in U15s upwards. You can find out more about the programme here: <https://www.englandrugby.com/rugbysafe/activate/>

7. HEADCASE UPDATE

The content of the Headcase training has been updated to take account of new guidance.

All Coaches, Match Officials, Parents, Players and Anyone else involved in the Game is strongly encouraged to complete the simple on line 20 minute course to help support our players and ensure the safest possible environment for all activity

Oh and it's free! How many of your Club's Coaches, Match Officials, Parents and Players have taken it?

<https://www.englandrugby.com/.../player-.../concussion-headcase/>

8. AGE GRADE INFO

Half-Game

We all know that one of the key drivers for young players to continue playing sport is their desire to play alongside their friends as part of a team. That's why from September 2018 England Rugby are asking all its Age Grade clubs, schools and colleges to make sure everyone in a match day squad gets to play at least half the game time available.

This half game rule is being introduced voluntarily in England and follows successful implementation in New Zealand and Wales and a trial in local club and school competitions in England last year. This voluntary year will help prepare for mandatory introduction from September 2019.

To find out more about half game, along with top tips and FAQ's, please visit: <https://www.englandrugby.com/my-rugby/players/age-grade-rugby/age-grade-competition-review/>

9. X-RUGBY 7's

X-Rugby 7's is a new format of rugby, which is big on enjoyment, and low on commitment. It's a quicker game, with fewer players which can be played almost anywhere. It is contact rugby but not as you know it!

For further information on X-Rugby 7's, please visit: <https://www.englandrugby.com/my-rugby/find-rugby/play-rugby/xrugby7s/>

10. AWARD COURSE DATES

COURSE BOOKING

All of the dates and venues have now been confirmed (up until January 2019) for both the England Rugby Coaching Award & England Rugby Refereeing Award courses taking place across the South East and remind any budding coaches/referees to visit our courses page to book on line. <http://www.kent-rugby.org/courses/>

11. DBS

With the new season only a matter of a couple of weeks away, clubs are encouraged to consider their coach development plans. A reminder that coaches working with children must have an RFU DBS. See the RFU 's helpful leaflets.

[Minimum standards leaflet](#)

[DBS Disclosures](#)

12. GROUNDSMAN CONNECTED

Rugby Groundsmen Connected (RGC) is the RFU's easy access, two-way communication network between the RFU and rugby union groundsmen. It is the main communication channel for the RFU to provide information and advice to groundsmen and also has special offers and exclusive benefits for members. Groundsmen Connected is for anybody that has any involvement in the upkeep of rugby pitches; complete novice to Premiership groundsmen. Anyone can register to join RGC at no cost. Once signed up they will receive regular communications with advice, information and the opportunity to ask questions.

To sign up please visit: <https://www.englandrugby.com/governance/club-support/facilities-kit-and-equipment/rugby-union-grass-pitches/rugby-pitch-maintenance/>

13. ARTIFICIAL GRASS PITCHES

(World Rugby Regulation 22)



In the aftermath of the summer heatwave, we are aware that Clubs are potentially looking to utilise Artificial Grass Pitches for training or even matches – to ensure player safety remains at the forefront, please have a quick look at the list of compliant Artificial Grass Pitches.

<https://www.englandrugby.com/governance/club-support/facilities-kit-and-equipment/artificial-surfaces/artificial-grass-pitches>

14. MINIMISING DROUGHT STRESS

Good maintenance practices will encourage the development of a vigorous healthy sward with a deep root system, which will be able to withstand the effects of drought better than a weak sward with shallow rooting. See a helpful guide on how to cope with drought [HERE!](#)

15. KENT YOUTH RUGBY 2018 - 2019 SEASON

This season see a number of changes for Youth Rugby.

The Youth Committee, reporting to the Game Development Committee are going digital. Details of all competitions and documentation pertaining thereto can now be found on the Youth Competitions pages [HERE!](#)

As the season progresses we will use the pages as the primary means of communicating with you and informing

you of results so make sure you have your page saved in your favourites!

The Youth Calendar – which we now have to agree with the RFU – is available to download from our website <http://www.kent-rugby.org/youth/>

As of 1st August the new RFU Age Grade Regulation 15 was published. It is important that coaches and managers of age grade teams become familiar with the changes, particularly in relation to playing up or down and playing out of season. Similarly new rules for each age grade have been published as appendices to Regulation 15. You can access information via the Kent County RFU website or directly at: <https://bit.ly/2MOYa5p>

The Youth Committee will continue to deliver county competitions in line with RFU guidelines, offering increasing competitive challenge as players mature. At U12 and U13 there will be a series of “waterfall” tournaments. At U14 there will be a short knock-out competition. At U15 and U16 there will be a season-long competition with group stages and knock-outs.

The biggest change will come for U17s and U18s. For the older players we have a new line up of competitions which we hope will support clubs to engage their players and retain larger numbers in the youth game against a backdrop of schools competition and the appeal of the adult game. We’ll kick off the season with a “Turbo Tens” Tournament. There will be leagues for the U17s and U18s pre-Christmas and a new 12-a-side colts competition for clubs with small squads and post-Christmas there will be a new Colts Cup offering matches for all participating teams right through to Finals Day.

For all age groups Kent will support the RFU “half and half” initiative this season. Teams entering our county competitions will be asked to support the principal of offering to every player in the match day squad the chance to play half a match.

The Youth Committee is a small group of very hard working volunteers who administer a large number of matches each season for the benefit of clubs and their players. We are keen to hear from anyone who would be keen to join us to manage a competition or look after the accounts or offer IT support. Please contact: youth-rugby@kent-rugby.org.

16. RUGBY SAFE MANAGER ROLE

We are looking for a person to fill the role of our Rugby Safe Manager working alongside our Safeguarding Manager. The purpose of this role is to make the playing of rugby within the CB as safe as possible whilst ensuring player welfare standards are maintained at all times.

Details of the main tasks and responsibilities can be downloaded [here](#)



To register your interest in this role please contact the Kent County RFU Office using the enquiry form on our contact page.

17. INSIGHT EVENING

What can the CB do for you?

A number of those who responded to our survey earlier in the year, expressed the view that Kent County RFU should have greater visibility. Therefore, Kent County Executive Committee will be delivering a presentation on the evening of Wednesday 26th Sept giving insights into what the CB is doing to assist clubs. The evening will be sponsored by Shepherd Neame at the Old Brewery Store facility in Faversham and invitations will be sent out at the beginning of September to each Club President and Chairman. (or 2 alternative board members)

The format for the evening will be:

A complimentary drinks reception sampling some of Shepherd Neame’s beers and a 2-course meal, followed by a presentation from Kent County RFU Executive Committee culminating with a Q & A session.

18. SMALL GRANTS PROGRAMME 2018-2019

We are launching this season’s Small Grants Programme (SGP) and invite applications from clubs for grant funding.

The County’s Small Grants Programme (SGP) makes available grant funding to assist Clubs to improve their facilities and pitches. The funding exists principally to provide a kick-start to major capital projects, such as the building of a new clubhouse or to improve changing room facilities, but subject to the financial resources being available, it is also used to support smaller projects. Grants from the SGP are available to all the County’s clubs.

Timetable

The SGP will be run in two phases, which will allow clubs that have yet to formulate their respective club development / facilities plans for the coming season an opportunity later in the year to apply. Grant awards will be based on each application’s strict adherence to the CB’s strategic priorities.

The timetable, which allows for monies to be awarded and disbursed within the County's accounting period for both phases, will be as follows:

Phase 1 – Applications are invited now, to be received by 31 August 2018, with grant awards announced by 30 September.

Phase 2 – Applications invited from 1 December 2019, to be received by no later than 31 December, with grant awards announced by 31 January 2019.

Completed applications should be submitted to Nigel Fray (Facilities Funding Manager), by the deadlines above, to facilities@kent-rugby.org

See our website for funding criteria: [HERE](#)

19. KENT REFEREES GROUP

Sara Cox is the guest speaker at the next Kent Referee Group event. The event is for anybody who referees at their club or at Kent Referees Society.

Monday 27th August 2018 at 1930-2100
Aylesford Bulls RFC



Sara is an international referee who is fresh off the back of refereeing at the RWC Sevens in San Francisco

Sara will be talking to us about the art of positioning and her experiences as a referee.

Anyone is welcome to join us, drop an email to coaching-refereeing@kent-rugby.org to let us know you are coming (there is a FREE buffet)

20. CPD COURSES 2018-2019

See our website for new CPD courses. [HERE!](#)

Scrum Factory

HSBC RFC - Wed 5th Sept, - 7-10pm
Gravesend RFC - Wed 26th Sept, 7-10pm

Rugby Ready

Medway RFC - Mon 10th Sept, 7-10pm

CARDS

Gillingham Anchorians - Wed 19th Sept, 7-10pm
Old Colfes RFC - Wed 19th Sept, 7-10pm

Gamechangers

Westcombe Park RFC- Thurs 27th Sept, 7-10pm
Sevenoaks RFC- Thurs 1st Oct, 7-10pm
Medway RFC- Thurs 12th Nov, 7-10pm

Principles of :

Defence - Vigo RFC - Mon 15th Oct, 7-9:30pm
Attack - Tonbridge Judd's RFC - Mon 7th Nov, 7-10pm
Attack - Gillingham Anchorians - Mon 26th Nov, 7-10pm
Attack - Old Alleynians RFC - 28th Nov, 7-10pm

Kids First Refereeing Children

Maidstone RFC - 3rd Dec, 7-10pm

21. ALTERNATIVES TO ENSURING YOUR GAME IS PLAYED.

More Players, More Games, More Bar Sales! Getting games played, helps your Club thrive! Don't be afraid of picking up the phone and discussing options with opposing teams - after all, we all just want to play

**MORE GAMES
MORE PLAYERS
MORE BAR SALES**

CONSIDER FLEXIBLE NUMBERS OF PLAYERS PER TEAMS

DO PLAYERS NEED TO BE LENT OR SWAPPED?

WHEN CAN THE GAME BE PLAYED? (FRIDAY NIGHT ETC)

DO THE LAWS NEED TO BE ADAPTED?

DOES THE PITCH NEED SHORTENING OR NARROWING?

MUST THE GAME BE PLAYED OVER 80 MINUTES?

PICK UP THE PHONE TO THE OPPOSITION TO TALK THROUGH ANY CONCERNS

CONSIDER DIFFERENT FORMATS OF THE GAME (X-RUGBY 7S ETC)

Click image to enlarge/download poster

22. RFU Regulations (2018-19)

Any amendments and updates to the RFU Regulations for 2018-19 are now visible online at - <https://www.englandrugby.com/governance/regulations/>