

# KENT COUNTY RFU INFORMATION SENDOUT OCTOBER 2019



## 1. CB WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE 2019-20

You will remember that last season the County held 4 consultation meetings at Faversham, Maidstone, Canterbury and Westcombe Park with players, coaches and administrators on what our key objectives should be for 2019/20.

You will also remember that recruitment and retention of adult men's fifteen a side players was overwhelmingly identified as the number one target. It is for this reason that we are pleased to say that over £40k of discretionary spend has been earmarked for this purpose as well as another £25k to be spent on planning and investing in facilities, support and guidance to clubs, projects that support player retention, and the quality of welcome provided by our Kent clubs. This latter area will support the recruitment and retention of players through raising the standard of facilities further and also provide some funding for innovative methods of welcoming new members.

It will also be of help to note that over the last 4 years KCRFU have contributed £100k from reserves to it's clubs through the Small Facilities Grant fund administered by Nigel Fray as the County Facilities Manager. This until the end of last season supported the RFU major facilities grant funding.

To underpin the recruitment and retention theme in this year's budget and objectives we have included the following within the 2019/20 work programme:

- Competitions review to include a mid- season reassessment of results and failures to honour fixtures- More flexibility in merit table rules around numbers- the Game On principles and front row rules around uncontested scrums.
- Front Row Courses. The first course has already been trialled in Metropolitan Kent to provide a model to roll out to the rest of the County.

- A small grant pot to be created to reward innovative ideas around the club welcome and potential to recruit players and volunteers.
- Sharing of Best Practice relating to transition from Junior to the Senior Men's XV a side game and the general retention of 18-24 year olds.
- Support for Succession planning in clubs and the County and the continued running of a Kent leadership Academy with an emphasis-without being exclusively so - on 18-24 year olds in the game.
- Support of facilities planning where the emphasis is placed on recruitment and retention of players.
- Continued and enhanced support for training good quality coaches by volunteers and by the RFU CRC's coaching of coaches to retain players.
- Emphasis on training club referees to support the current structure of the game and to encourage the training of both young coaches and referees.
- Support of clubs through Seminars, Club Forums and potentially webinars to demonstrate how to 'plug-in ' to external grant funding networks.

We look forward to maintaining this two way consultation and would like to keep the dialogue going through our website, facebook pages, club forums, leadership academy and various training courses at county and RFU level. Please contact the following if you have any points you want to raise on this note or on any other issue:

office@kent-rugby.org  
game-development-chair@kent-rugby.org  
club-development-chair@kent-rugby.org  
chairman@kent-rugby.org

## 2. SMALL GRANTS PROGRAMME CHANGES FOR 2019-20

Since its introduction at the beginning of the 2016-17 season, the Small Grants Programme (SGP) has awarded grants of well over £100,000 to clubs across the County. These grants have ranged from projects to upgrade changing facilities, including for ladies and girls, floodlights, pitch-side barriers, as well as emergency / remedial repairs and maintenance.

Importantly, grants have been awarded across many types of clubs, from small, one team clubs and start-ups in the Kent Rural & Metropolitan leagues, to those that compete in the national leagues. The aim has been always to ensure that clubs secure 'bang for bucks' and so deliver good quality projects for their playing and non-playing membership alike.

As Roger Clarke's recent report of his first year on the RFU Council notes ([access report here](#)), the County (as with other Constituent Bodies) has been affected by the RFU's decision to reduce spending within the Community game. As a result, Kent lost £20,000 from central RFU funds, which has been exacerbated by the further decision to suspend major facilities grants for clubs. This has inevitably had a detrimental impact on how we can support facilities funding within Kent, with the decision to halve the SGP budget for this season.

### What does this mean for clubs?

The County sees it still as a priority to support clubs as much as it can, to help improve facilities. But we have had to reflect how best we can achieve this within the current financial environment.



We consulted widely last season to get clubs' views on priority areas to include in its RFU Local funding spend. Clubs told us that the recruitment and retention of adult XV-a-side men's players was paramount. Obviously, the focus here is on the playing side, and how to widen the rugby 'offer' to attract and retain players; however, insofar as this relates to facilities funding, there is a need too, to ensure that clubs are hospitable and attractive, such that members want to spend their social time in the clubhouse. This can be summarised as the 'Club Welcome'.

Our budget this season is £10,000. This obviously limits what the County is able to do. Nevertheless, the amount of

money that the County can provide through grant funding, in addition to clubs' own financial resources, need not be large – a lick of paint, etc. is not expensive, relatively speaking, but if it brightens up the clubhouse, bar area, and/or changing rooms, it may make the difference between keeping players or losing them.

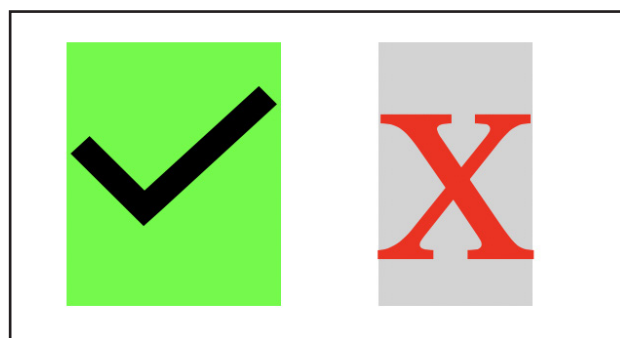
For the 2019-20 season, therefore, SGP grant funding will be focused exclusively on 'Club Welcome' projects. **Maximum grants will be limited to £500** (as opposed to the previous maximum limit of £5,000). In all other respects, the application remains the same: Please see our website [HERE](#) for further details

The deadline for receipt of applications is 30 November 2019. Applications should be sent to Nigel Fray at [facilities@kent-rugby.org](mailto:facilities@kent-rugby.org).

## 3. AGE GRADE COACHING DO'S AND DON'TS

Despite long term efforts to educate Age Grade coaches around the contact game we continue to receive reports of poor practice around the county including engaging in direct contact in rucking and tackling drills.

All adults - coaches and parents - are reminded of Code of Practice: 2 Section 10- Remember that coaches are not allowed to train or play contact rugby with children, nor should they hold a tackle bag or shield.



From a Safety and Safeguarding perspective this practice should stop immediately. If you see it, challenge it!

Tackle bags can be used safely where players of the same age grade work together.

It is important for all adults (including all coaches, helpers, parents etc,) to note that ALL players under the age of 18 may not play, or train with other adults, unless specific approval has been given by KCRFU. Adults should not:

- Demonstrate or participate in contact on/with a player who is under 17
- Hold a pad for a player to run into, or run into a pad held by a player who is under 18
- Demonstrates or participates in scrummage technique against a player under 18

- Demonstrates or participates in “lifting” of a player in a line-out who is Under 18
- Demonstrates or participates in ruck/maul technique on or with a player who is Under 18

Furthermore, tackle bags are designed to be held using one hand on either handle, as opposed to the whole arm slid through the bag. This exposes the forearm to a high degree of impact, and in the event of an arm injury, means having to extract the injured limb from this ‘tunnel’.

Coaching the tackle is key to skill development. If you need support talk to senior coaches, RDOs or to the Kent Coaching and Refereeing Development team.

#### 4. AGE GRADE PLAYER REGISTRATION

The first batch of this season’s mini festivals are well underway and are advertised on the events calendar on our website. Unfortunately organisers have been left with a dilemma due to a significant proportion of children wishing to play for their clubs turning up without player ID numbers.

Registering players is not optional and clubs must explain to parents the consequences of not doing so.

RFU Regulation requires players to be registered online each season within 45 days of the start of the season or from first joining the club.

Age Grade Player Registration is a fully online annual process for club players between U6 to U18. It involves a players’ parent / guardian registering their child on the RFUs Game Management System (GMS). The record is then approved by the Club Registrar.

For the 2019/2020 season players already registered must update the existing record to provide medical information, emergency contact details and updated consents.

The updated process ensures that parents and players are in control of their own data and unique individual record through their lifetime in rugby. It provides more consistent, accurate and up-to-date information for clubs and the RFU to help players and parents enjoy their Age Grade Rugby and transition into the adult game.

For new players an easy guide to registration can be found **HERE**.

#### 5. FAQ'S - GMS TEAM MANAGEMENT MODULE

The County over the past few weeks has received a number of questions from Clubs regarding the recording of games played on the RFU Game Management System( GMS)

These have revolved around ‘claiming’ missing games for

season 2018/19 which can be done but have to be carried out by a dedicated Fixture Sec or Assistant or Ladies and Girls Fixture Sec or equivalent. (information on the guidance document below). The correct season filter ie 2018/19 or 2019/20 needs to be used to achieve this.

We have also received questions on whether if a fixture is claimed for last season and the opposition don’t approve - what happens? The answer to this is that if it’s not acknowledged within 7 days the system automatically credits the game to your club.

Please see the detailed RFU ‘answers to questions’ ( FAQ) guidance document **HERE!**



Further key dates relating to completing indicative games played figures for both the 2018/19 and the 2019/20 seasons will follow towards the end of November or beginning of December.

#### 6. AGE GRADE PERMISSIONS

Age Grade Rugby ensures that every young player is able to enjoy rugby in a safe environment, where they can develop their personal and social skills, as well as a wide array of transferable multi-sports skills.

The Regulations underpinning Age Grade Rugby ensures that the sport can take place in a safe environment for young players and coaches alike, and so, prosper across the County.

The RFU Council approved updates to the Age Grade Rugby Regulation (15) at its June 2019 meeting. These came into force this season (2019-20). In addition, the Government’s Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) has provided updated advice on 17-year-olds playing adult rugby, which has meant the introduction of a new process.

These are important changes. We strongly advise clubs to be acquainted with them and to comply with all necessary actions. Any breaches and/or non-compliance of the Regulation by clubs could result in disciplinary procedures and sanctions imposed upon them.

**The principal changes are as follows:**

- Age Grade Player Registration: Players in the U7, U8,

U16, U17 and U18 age groups in a club are required to register via parents on GMS. Players who are new to the game and who registered online last year also need to re-register using this process. This gives players and parents more control of their own personal data and is GDPR-compliant. This process will also help to reduce the administrative burden on volunteer registrars and will provide players and clubs with more accurate data.

- **17 Year Olds Playing Adult Rugby:** A two-step process has been introduced for 17-year old players (male and female) to play adult rugby. This process ensures that clubs have a Safeguarding Officer and approval from the County to play up 17-year olds. This will then ensure that each individual player has also been assessed by the club and approved by the CB. There have been significant updates by the DBS to the rules on safeguarding children playing in adult sport. We want to safeguard our young players and our adult clubs/people in line with the level of the revised DBS requirements. This includes having a more robust assessment and neutral approval of the individual player.

- **Combining U17 and U18 Age Grades:** U17 and U18 may play as a combined age group without needing permission. This brings regulation in line with common practice in the club/school/college game. This also reduces the administrative burden on volunteers who previously needed to follow a permission process for an U17 to play with U18s.



Clubs are reminded, also, of the RFU Regulations that relate to tours, summer training camps, etc. and the requirement that permission is required for certain of these to be obtained from the local Constituent Body before they are advertised or go ahead.

The more common of the events included in this category are:

- 1) Permission to tour outside of England (at least 1 months' notice required)

- 2) Permission to host an Incoming Tour for teams outside of England (at least 1 months' notice required)

- 3) Permission to run a Rugby Camp, even if it is run by a professional organisation and you are the "host" (at least 1 months' notice required)

- 4) Permission to run/host a Mini or Youth Festival (at least 3 months' notice required)

- 5) Permission to play an Age Grade player in a younger Age Grade

- 6) Permission to combine two Age Grades

- 7) Permission for an Under 17 to play Adult Rugby

Numbers 1, 2 and 3 of these forms should be sent to the Honorary Secretary ([hon-sec@kent-rugby.org](mailto:hon-sec@kent-rugby.org)) and forms 4 – 7 inclusive should be sent to the Youth Chair, ([youth-rugby@kent-rugby.org](mailto:youth-rugby@kent-rugby.org)).

On receipt of these forms, stringent Safeguarding checks are carried out, as we contact our County Safeguarding Officer, and also your club's local Rugby Development Officer, to ensure there are no concerns before permission is granted. These forms are not 'rubber stamped' - just filling them in does not mean that permission is granted; each application for an event will be assessed against the Regulations and other related criteria.

Many of these documents can be downloaded [HERE!](#)

Please help us to help you by completing these forms in good time - we are here to ensure that rugby is played in a safe environment and can be enjoyed by everybody.

Further advices can be obtained from Debby Park (Chair, Youth Rugby), and from the Hon, Secretary, Sylvia Taylor

## 7. KCRFU FINANCIAL AGM NOTICE

Representatives from our member clubs are invited to attend the Annual Financial General Meeting, which will be held at the Holiday Inn, London Road, Wrotham Heath, Kent TN15 7RS on Tuesday 10th December 2019 at 7.00pm for the purpose of transacting the following business:



### AGENDA

1. To receive the Company's Financial Statement for the year ended on 30th June 2019 and the Auditors' report thereon and to make any suitable order in respect thereof.

2. To hear any other relevant financial matter for the consideration of the County Committee during the ensuing year, but on which no voting shall be allowed.

Kent County RFU accounts are currently being finalised,

will then be sent to the Auditors and once finalised will be posted on the website [kent-rugby.org](http://kent-rugby.org) and available for inspection at the meeting.

Clubs have also recently been reminded that their own club accounts have to be submitted to Kent County RFU's Treasurer ([hon-treasurer@kent-rugby.org](mailto:hon-treasurer@kent-rugby.org)) each year, and that their annual subscription to be a member of Kent RFU is also due. Please ensure that your club has completed these actions.

Please register your attendance by emailing the Kent County Office. [office@kent-rugby.org](mailto:office@kent-rugby.org)

## 8. RUGBY WORLD CUP STORIES

Both England Rugby & Kent RFU are looking for good news stories that have taken place across Kent during the Rugby World Cup – should you have any you wish to share, along with photographs, please send them into your local Rugby Development Officer, or Kent County office details of which can be found [HERE](#):



## 9. KENT COUNTY PLAYING FIELDS ASSOCIATION

Kent County RFU has for many years had strong links with Kent County Playing Fields Association (KCPFA) and as such, purchases bulk membership of KCPFA for its member clubs. This means that clubs who previously purchased their membership of KCPFA separately no longer need to do so. All clubs are encouraged to visit KCPFA website <https://www.kentpfa.org.uk/> to see the type of work and support they carry out.

## 10. SATELLITE CLUB FUNDING WINDOW

Specifically for Clubs within Metropolitan Kent

The funding window for Satellite Clubs within Metropolitan Kent is still open until Thursday October 31st – through London Sport. Satellite Clubs are focused on supporting an increase in the number of 14-19 year olds participating regularly in physical activity and sport. The clubs should be designed to meet the needs of young people and provide a positive fun experience, giving young people the confidence to take part. For further information and to check your Club's eligibility click [HERE](#).

## 11. SARACENS KENT DPP INFORMATION EVENING

Kirstie Hoyle, Saracens Kent DPP Administrator will be giving a talk about the Saracens Kent DPP at Whitstable RFC on 14th Nov 2019, @19:30 - 20:30 hrs.

She will discuss the aims of the programme, the structure and nature of it, how nominations work and the level of players they are looking to be introduced into the programme. In addition she will be discussing how the programme develops through the age grades.

## 12. WEATHER AFFECTED PITCHES



With the current weather being inclement, there is of course the potential danger of pitches being more at risk than at other stages during the season. Please try and be as proactive as possible in terms of locating additional playing spaces to avoid wear and tear on the pitches.

As a reminder, don't forget there are a number of Artificial Grass Pitches across the South East, and these can be found via the following link: [AGP](#)

## 13. CLUB COACHING & CLUB REFEREE CO-ORDINATOR FORUMS

Kent RFU Coach & Referee Committee in conjunction with the England Rugby local development team are hosting a number of Coach & Referee Development forums throughout Kent during November.

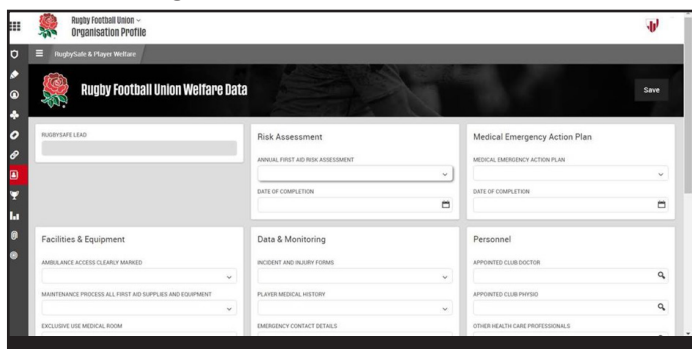
These forums are targeted towards those with the role of Coaching and/or Referee Coordinator, with the focus being on supporting such roles, and communicating the processes involved to plan local courses. Clubs are welcome to book more than one place onto each forum, and to do so please use this link: [BOOKING LINK](#)

## 14. 2019-20 START OF SEASON UPDATES - REMINDER

As there have been a number of amendments across the game of Rugby Union for the start of this season (19-20), a document has been created to give a brief overview on this, as well as signposting individuals towards further information should it be needed. This document can be downloaded [HERE](#).

## 15. RUGBY SAFE - GAME MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (GMS) UPDATE

The new Rugby Safe & Player Welfare page on GMS is now live – to ensure your Club's GMS page reflects an accurate picture can you please check the information is correct for your Club. An example of the page is shown below: Click [HERE](#) to enlarge.



## 16. RUGBY READY & MANAGING CONTACT CPD'S - PLAYER SAFETY

To continue to support both new coaches and referees, as well as those individuals who may have shifted up an age group, or simply are looking to expand their knowledge base, we wanted to remind you of a couple of CPD's focused towards Player Safety. These courses are 'Rugby Ready' and 'Managing Contact', with descriptors below – should you wish to find out more information on the location of upcoming courses, please visit the Kent RFU website or contact your local Community Rugby Coach - **KCRFU CONTACTS**

**Rugby Ready** – The Rugby Ready course is targeted at coaches and match officials and provides information on the importance of sufficient and appropriate preparation for training and playing while reducing the risk of serious injury.

**Managing Contact** - Using intelligence from the RFU Injury survey to identify risk areas of the game, Managing Contact is a practical course supported by online footage which looks at how techniques from other sports such as Grappling and Judo to help coaches develop players who are physically prepared and have safe and effective skills in the contact area.

## 17. NATIONAL RUGBY SURVEY

Fancy the chance to win either one of five £100 England Rugby Store vouchers, or one of five pairs of tickets to an England Men's XV match at Twickenham in 2020. Then all you need to do is complete the National Rugby Survey, [HERE!](#)



## 18. COACHING LINEOUT WITH ALEX CODLING - OCT 28th

One of our neighbouring Clubs, Barking RFC, are hosting a 'Coaching the Lineout' workshop, which is being delivered by Alex Codling (Harlequins Forwards Coach).



This workshop is targeted for those coaches involved with the game from Under 14's through to Seniors. To claim your FREE place, please use the booking link. [HERE.](#)

## 19. ENGLAND RUGBY CLUB HUB

We wanted to make you aware of 'The England Rugby Club Hub', which provides the rugby community with access to England Rugby's partner and supplier offers. This transactional platform enables clubs to purchase products needed to play and host rugby. The custom-designed system, provides a simple, efficient method for purchasing club essentials from England Rugby partners and approved suppliers. Please visit the website, to register - [HERE.](#)

## 20. RAM DISCOUNTS FOR MEMBER CLUBS & SCHOOLS

With the new season starting RAM Rugby are offering all Kent RFU Clubs and Schools a 10% discount across a range of their products, an ideal opportunity to get those things that you need to get your season off to a good start.

