

KENT COUNTY RFU INFORMATION SENDOUT FEBRUARY 2021



1. RETURN TO RUGBY

The Rugby Football Union (RFU) welcomes the announcement by the Prime Minister that grassroots team sports including community rugby can return from 29th March and the start of fans returning to stadiums from May.



This is good news for the game and for the players, coaches, and volunteers across the country, who will once again be able to enjoy the physical and mental health benefits of being involved in team sport.

The RFU will work with DCMS on the COVID protocols for the community game, including the format of rugby that will be permitted in the return to play.

The RFU will also look forward to working with Government and other sports on the safe return of fans to stadiums.

2. ADVANCED COACHING AWARD

Please find details about the England Rugby Advanced Coaching Award (Previously Level 3 Coaching) below. Please feel free to share with coaches for who it would be relevant.

The England Rugby Advanced Coaching Award for 2021/22 will kick off in February with 2 webinars that prospective participants need to complete.

First up is the Advanced Coaching Workshop Part 1, which is a free on-demand webinar that anyone wishing to take part in the ER Advanced Coaching Award MUST complete as a pre-requisite for booking. It will outline details for the 2021/22 course, including expectations of applicants, the pre-requisites that need to be completed prior to booking, and proposed course dates and venues.

This will be followed in March with the Advanced Coaching Workshop Part 2 with booking for the full courses due to open in May 2021.

To book onto and view the Advanced Coaching Workshop Part 1 on demand here: <http://bit.ly/2ZbGRAo>

Please be aware that course dates and venues are provisional and subject to change or cancellation depending on the evolving situation with the Coronavirus pandemic.



3.COACHING WORKSHOP

Club Coaching and Referee Co-ordinators Workshop



The RFU South East Training team would like to invite Club Coaching and Referee Coordinators to join us to a specialised workshop for their role. The CCC/CrefC Workshop will cover our Course Training Booklet (Offer), Course Windows for the 2021/2022 Season, the role of Coach Developers, and some useful tips to better support the volunteers in your club. CCCs/CrefCs only need to attend one of the dates below.

If you are unable to attend please feel free to invite another Golden Role to attend ie Youth/Mini/W&G Lead. All Workshops will be delivered via Teams and you'll be sent a link to join the session 48 hours before it starts. To book, please select the GMS Booking links below:

Wednesday 10th March 2021 19:00-20:30

Wednesday 24th March 2021 19:00-20:30'

4.SAFEGUARDING AUDITS OVERDUE

Everyone shares the responsibility for safeguarding and creating safe environments in rugby union whether as a parent, coach, spectator or club official.

For those clubs that haven't completed their Safeguarding audits on GMS, please do so urgently. The deadline was November and many of Kent clubs have not completed them. This is a very important regulation (**Regulation 21**) that clubs must comply with. Failure to do so may lead to sanctions being imposed. Completed audits should be submitted via GMS no later than March 12th.



5.PAYMENT OF PLAYERS

Following the RFU Council decision and because of the effect of Covid-19, the requirement to provide a Payment of Player declaration as per Regulation 7 has been removed for season 2020/21. This will mean that all clubs will be eligible for RFU benefits for season 2021/22, with a requirement to complete the declaration again from March 2022

6.SHOW YOUR SHIRT

The RFU wants to thank all of our clubs, and universities for sending in their shirts and continuing to show their support during the pandemic.



Below there is a link that can be used to download images of the club shirts displayed during the 2021 Guinness Six Nations matches and we hope you've enjoyed seeing yours.

SEE YOUR SHIRT

If you would like to send your shirt in please see the #ShowYourShirt page below for a Freepost label.

FREEPOST LABEL

It will be so good to get back to normal activities and sit in these seats or enjoy celebrating together at our clubs. Enjoy the Six Nations.



7. THE RFU WINTER SPORT GRANTS

A brief update to say that the deadline for applying for these grants passed at 5:00 pm on Thursday 25th Feb. 29 Kent Clubs have applied which is around 50% of our RFU voting clubs.



The RFU panel which will sit to look at the applications of under £50k per club will sit next Friday and is made up of David Roberts Chair of the RFU community Game Board, Steve Grainger RFU Rugby Development Director, and Roger Clarke Chair of the RFU Club and CB development Sub Committee.

It is hoped that the successful clubs will receive their grants by the end of March beginning of April latest.

Thanks go to the Executive Committee of the County and particularly to our RFU club Developer Mark Finnis who has gone above and beyond to provide advice and help to our County Clubs for which we are grateful.

One or two clubs who have applied may well be contacted this week as I understand they may need to provide more required documentation.

8. CONSULTATION CLUSTERS - FEBRUARY

Thanks to all Kent clubs for their continued support of the KCRFU club clusters which give us the opportunity to update you on the latest issues and information regarding the game generally, and specifically currently on the games shutdown and potential restart.

We have been running clusters both physically and virtually since we held our inaugural full Kent consultation when we met with Chairs and Presidents at Shepherd Neame Faversham in September 2018 and so when we were hit by the Corona pandemic in March 2019 we were already used to meeting regularly with our clubs.

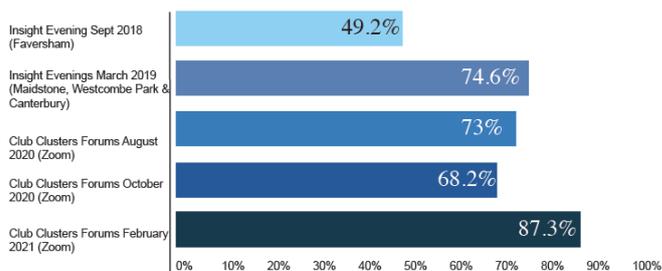
As a result, it was a relatively simple job for our Club Development Committee and Executive to form 5 geographical clusters North, Metropolitan, East, Mid, and West Kent, and a specific County wide cluster for the Women and Girls game and to use Zoom to connect with them.

At the first physical meeting at Faversham back in 2018 49% of our 59 RFU voting clubs in Kent sent their President and or their Chair to the meeting. Since then we have set up the Zoom clusters, widened the attendance to try and include officers, DOR's and players, and appointed cluster leaders to be the point of initial contact for their clusters on key topics.

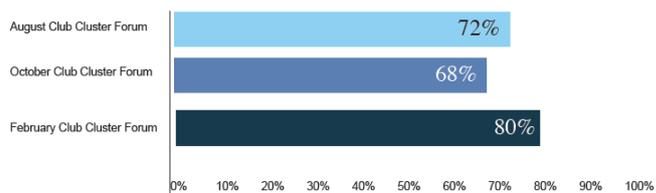
You - the clubs- have supported these very well since the first session – so much so that we have moved from an attendance of 74% of our Kent clubs at the physical clusters held in Feb – March 2019 to 87% of our clubs at the recent cluster evenings held in February 2021.

We also saw our first 100% attendance achieved by North Kent and Metropolitan not far behind at 92% and the Women and Girls cluster reaching 80% of our clubs who have W and G sections. Only 5% of our clubs are yet to attend a cluster evening and we are working with them to encourage them to break their duck at the next event.

Overall club engagement across each event



Club Cluster Forums Attendance of 25 Clubs with W & G Activity



We will also be working on trying to get clubs to include a player in their group of attendees and are already seeing some success here with 12% of attendees being Directors of Rugby, 11% being Coach Managers and 11% being players at the February 2021 cluster events. These results have meant that Kent County RFU lead the Country in keeping close to and listening to Club needs at this difficult time.

There will be at least one more round of Zoom cluster meetings this season and so watch this space as we hold it in conjunction with news on what we can do to reopen our clubs, potentially during April, May as the Government and the RFU provide guidance.

In the meantime, we look forward to seeing you before long on our screens again.

Finally, I would like to thank Tracy Pettingale for working closely with you all from the County office to ensure that Clubs are aware of these events and get the best possible representation at them.

Roger Clarke- Chair KCRFU Executive Committee.
RFU Council Member for Kent.