

# KENT COUNTY RFU INFORMATION SENDOUT SEPTEMBER 2021



## 1. KENT ELECTS NEW PRESIDENT

At its recent AGM, Kent County RFU bade farewell to its President for the past 3 years, John Nunn from Old Colfeians. John was also presented with a bouquet of flowers for his wife by outgoing Hon Secretary Sylvia Taylor.

John has been a tireless servant to his club and the County working for many years with the County Senior Men's team and then the honour of becoming President for the past 3 years.



John has been succeeded as President by Doug Hursey the CEO/ Chair of Charlton Park RFC. In his acceptance speech, Doug spoke of his years playing for Charlton Park, his time at Blackheath, and receiving his caps for playing at Kent County

and London Division level. He spoke of his honour of being elected as President and said that he will not be taking a back seat, having lent a hand to enhance Rugby's image within the County's business community.

Both Doug as President and Roger Clarke as Chair of the Exec and RFU Council Member for Kent are keen to visit the 59 voting clubs over the next three years with Paddock Wood and East Peckham, Aylesford Bulls, Cranbrook, Bromley, Sevenoaks, Charlton Park and, Blackheath already visited or in the diary. If you would like a visit from the President or the Chair please either contact them directly or through the County Office and Tracy Pettingale.

Roger Clarke  
Chairman KCRFU

## 2. POST LOCKDOWN RE-BOOT GRANTS

In anticipation of a return to active rugby in 2021-22 and to support clubs to get up-and-running, the County announced in July that it is making funding available to

clubs to support a range of activities (such as recruitment & retention of players, and initiatives to promote revenue generation) that you told us are your priority areas. Grants would be for a maximum of £500 and must be used in relation to the 're-boot', only.



We received applications from 28 clubs, with funding bids in total exceeding the budget available. We therefore had to make, in certain instances, quite difficult decisions, as to the amounts awarded, with some clubs not receiving the full amount that was applied for. Nevertheless, we have been able to ensure that all applicant clubs received at least some financial support to allow them to resume rugby across all groups (minis/youth/ women & girls/ men), as required, and to seek to ensure the recruitment and retention of players.

As was the intention of the 'Reboot' Fund, grants have been used by clubs for a wide range of activities, ranging from printed promotional leaflets, a schools community coaching tag festival, the wider community, and schools engagement, and social events to recruit and retain players, especially within the youth and minis sections of the game. We hope that all of these activities have been successful – and remind those clubs awarded grants under this Fund, to report back to the County, such that we can determine the effectiveness of the 'Reboot' initiative.

Nigel Fray  
Chair, KCRFU Covid Relief Fund

### 3. RFU PRESIDENT'S CHARITY WALK

Visits Kent (CB) celebrating the RFU's 150 years.

As part of the celebrations recognising 150 years of the RFU, the RFU President Jeff Blackett will undertake a 10 mile (approx) walk in each Constituent Body (CB) within the RFU. He will visit Kent on Sunday 24th October 2021.

Jeff is supporting the RFU's Primary Charity the RFU Injured Players Foundation which supports & protects the rugby family



The walk has been scheduled to maximise the number of clubs that might be visited with a 10 mile hike; starting at Charlton Park RFC the President will stop at Shooters Hill RFC, Blackheath RFC, Brockleians RFC, Elthamians (Junior) RFC, and Footscray RFC before returning to Blackheath RFC (Eltham) for a reception.

He will be joined by family and friends on the walk and will be accompanied by Kent RFU Chairman Roger Clarke and other members of the executive committee.

We would welcome the opportunity for a representative from your club to support these celebrations and join other club and county volunteers at the reception, hosted by Blackheath RFC (13.00hrs to 15.00hrs). If you would like to attend the reception contact our office at [office@kent-rugby.org](mailto:office@kent-rugby.org) by Monday 18th October.

Those wishing to make a donation towards the RFU's Charity can do so at <https://rfuipf.enthuse.com/cf/rfu-presidents-150th-walk>

### 4. LONDON ULTRA LOW EMISSION ZONE

Will it affect you on your travels to and from games?



On the 25th October 2021, the existing central London Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) will expand to create a larger single zone, up to both the South Circular Road (A205) and North Circular Road (A406). The zone will operate 24hrs / 7 days a week.

This will affect older polluting vehicles including cars, vans, minibuses, coaches, and motorcycles. These vehicles will

incur a £12.50 charge and if not paid will result in a fine. Kent clubs that sit within this expanded Zone include; Alleynians, Southwark, Kings College, Colfeians, Charlton Park, Shooters Hill, and Blackheath (Rectory). Travelling to other clubs on the fringes of these areas may also be impacted.

To understand the impact of the extended ULEZ on Kent clubs, players and officials, we ask that clubs within or travelling into the zone appraise the Kent RFU office of how these changes have affected their rugby; feedback to [office@kent-rugby.org](mailto:office@kent-rugby.org)

If sufficient significant data is obtained it will allow us to canvas the RFU to make representations on behalf of our sport

To check if your vehicle is exempt from these charges visit one of these websites and avoid being caught out.

<https://tfl.gov.uk/modes/driving/ultra-low-emission-zone/ulez-expansion>

<https://ulez.co.uk/ulez-checker/>

### 5. RUGBY LEADERS NETWORK

'The rugby leadership network has helped me connect with other clubs, understand how to help my team grow, and has given me confidence in my ability as a leader', 20/21 RLN Candidate.

The application window for the Rugby Leadership Network (RLN) closes on Sunday 10th October and we want to ensure our current and future leaders have the opportunity to develop themselves, with the support of others. As you'll know, the Rugby Leaders Network provides the opportunity for rugby leaders to connect, exchange ideas, and collectively develop clubs that are fit for the future – perhaps more important now, than ever! Please ensure the aspiring rugby leaders know of this opportunity so that they can help develop their club.

More information, and how individuals can sign up for the course can be found [HERE!](#)

There is also some promotional material to help to advertise:

Tweet [HERE!](#) Facebook Post [HERE](#)

### 6. AGE-GRADE, AFFILIATION PROCESS

Thank you for all your efforts so far with this season's Age Grade Affiliation process, please find below a link to information that may support your ongoing efforts.

A common theme is that parents/guardians are unaware they already have an account on GMS with their child(ren) associated with them. The process has proved effective in assisting Parents/Guardians access their accounts, reset passwords and affiliate their child(ren) saving valuable volunteer time.

See Age-grade helpful links [HERE](#) to assist in the Affiliation

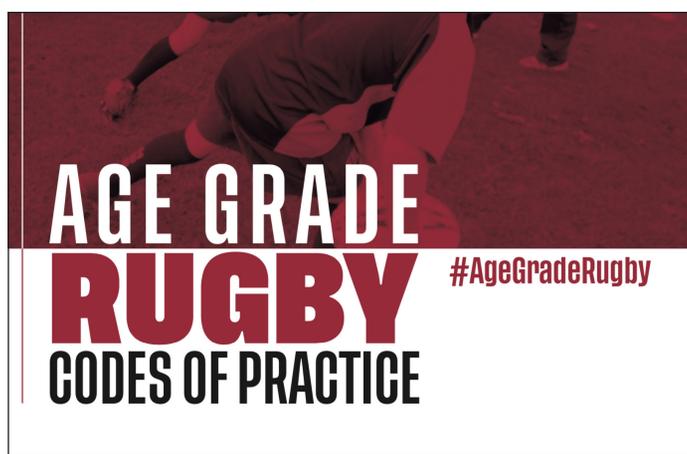
## REMINDER to All Club with Age Grade Sections

- U7s should not be playing any rugby fixtures/ festivals before 1<sup>st</sup> January 2022 in line with the [Age Grade Changes](#) Section 3
- U7s are permitted to arrange joint training sessions with other clubs to include fun activities such as stuck in the mud, rats and rabbits, rob the nest etc
- All festivals should be submitted to the Kent (CB) for approval

## 7. SAFEGUARDING - TACKLE BAGS

A safeguarding reminder in your age grades and the use of tackle bags and shields. As coaches please remember that coaches are not allowed to train or play contact rugby with children, nor should they hold a tackle bag or shield.

For more information about the Age-Grade code of practice click below.



If you have any questions please feel free to get in touch with me directly.

Paul Blacker  
SAFEGUARDING@KENT-RUGBY.ORG

## 8. FUNDING FOR COACHING & REFEREEING COURSES

Does your club have a shortage of referees? Find it hard to book a Society referee due to shortages? Becoming a referee has so many benefits and doesn't mean that you have to stop playing. There are games on a Saturday and Sunday and Mid Week so you do not have to stop playing.

The relief that players have on their faces when they see the referee turn up. They know now that they have a game. If every club put 2 members on a referee course and one joined the local Referee Society there wouldn't be a shortage. There were 6 Society league games unappointed last weekend and many more club senior/ youth games struggling to get a referee. Make the game safer by booking on a referee course. You could be refereeing after just Day 1 of the course.

There is funding available from Kent County RFU for courses, reimbursed on completion of the course. Book

now and reserve your funding by contacting our coaching & refereeing chair. (coaching-refereeing@kent-rugby.org)

These RFU courses will be cancelled if there are not enough attendees on course and won't run again until next autumn.

Courses start 10th October so don't delay.  
Venues

Simon Langton School  
10th October - <https://bit.ly/3AkyCCQ>

Dulwich College  
17th Oct - <https://bit.ly/3tGxGGs>

Sevenoaks School  
20th Nov <https://bit.ly/3z9phMV>

You will have to complete the short headcase online form to be able to book an RFU referee award course through GMS. Complete it **HERE!**

Reserve your funding by sending a confirmation of your booking to our coaching & refereeing chair, first come first served. Limited funding is available.  
coaching-refereeing@kent-rugby.org

## 9. GMS

Please ensure that your details are up to date on GMS. There are reports that people are not getting vital information and missing out on opportunities. GMS is the main communication vehicle for information to clubs by the RFU and Kent County RFU.

## 10. PROCESS FOR BOOKING A SOCIETY REFEREE

Does your club know how to book a Society referee? The Society has been overwhelmed with last-minute requests for referees by new volunteers having taken up the role within their clubs and who do not know the process.



The Referee Society does not have access to GMS and has its own database called, 'Whose The Ref', therefore it is important that the Society is updated as to who the fixture Secretary is and who the referee contact is for your team. It is the club's responsibility to update the Society, not the league secretaries.

If the Society does not have the right contact on the system the club's referee appointment notification will

not arrive and with no confirmation from the club means the referee will be moved to another game. There is a shortage of referees so it is vital that clubs follow the process and ensure that the Society is up to date with the correct contact details.

The Society has received all the league games direct from the league secretaries however if you rearrange a fixture you must contact the Society to alter the fixture. Again the league secretaries cannot police this so the responsibility is up to the club to inform the Society of those changes.

You must supply the Referee Society with all the right information, match date, kick-off time, home team and opposition, and also the competition.

Please note that if your league game is cancelled you must inform the referee and the appointments team at the Society and not hold onto the referee to cover another game or a friendly. Such actions will mean that future referees will be appointed first to non-offending clubs.

Information about the process can be found **HERE!**

Any questions contact [admin@kentrefs.co.uk](mailto:admin@kentrefs.co.uk)

Requests for referees should be directed to the appointments team: [appointmentsteam@kentrefs.co.uk](mailto:appointmentsteam@kentrefs.co.uk)

## 11. COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP REVIEW

Assuming the season continues to progress as normal without Covid-19 disruptions, we can confirm there will be a County Championship across all three existing Competitions - Senior Men's, Senior Women's, and U20s Men's - this season 2021-22.

At its recent meeting, the Community Game Board (CGB) discussed initial recommendations from the County Championship Review Group as to the future direction of the competitions from 2022/23 onwards. They look forward to developing many of these areas further over the coming weeks and months, before confirming plans for 2022/23 onwards. The CGB was keen to make a decision about the current season now, to give counties sufficient preparation time while further discussions are held to consider the longer-term future, which may or may not include three different County Championships.

An organising committee made up of Council Members supported by RFU employees, and with delegated authority from the Competition Development Sub - Committee of CGB, has begun planning for this season's County Championships. More information will follow in due course, including specific CB funding allocations and finals location.

## 12. GUIDANCE ON PLAYING UP - U17s

With the adult league season underway, the process for

17-year-olds playing/training in adult contact rugby is suspended until 1st January 2022.

i.e. 17-year-olds are not permitted to play in adult contact training or games until this date (except for in combined U18/19 teams and for RFU approved male EAPs and female Premier 15 players).

The Electronic Match Cards system shows some clubs have played 17-year-olds in adult matches. As a reminder, this breaches the regulation because approval has not been given by their CB and because of the suspension until January. This suspension applies to male and female players and those with a previous or existing dispensation.

Many of these players have missed the last 18 months of rugby, with some last playing full contact when they were 15-years-old. By playing and training in their peer group it should encourage retention of these players and allow them to prepare safely for any adult contact rugby in the future.

## 13. BONFIRE AND FIREWORK DISPLAYS

Planning starts now – information from RFU Insurance Broker Howden

There are many things to consider if you are planning to host a bonfire and fireworks display at your club to ensure the event is fun, safe, and does not end in tragedy.

In preparation for the fireworks season, as usual, Howden's have updated their risk management guidance on the RFU Insurance centre website **HERE!**

Clubs should check they can comply with this guidance. If they can't or wish to check insurance cover for their Bonfire and Fireworks Displays, please call Howden on 0121 698 8001 or send a message **HERE!**

