

KENT COUNTY RFU INFORMATION SENDOUT DECEMBER 2023



1. RFU COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

No sooner- it seems- than the season has started we are at the halfway point of 23-24, moving fast now away from those periods during Covid when no Rugby was played.

Like society in general, the game has had a lot of changes to deal with. Clubs with backgrounds in banking, the emergency services, and to a lesser degree, Old Boys' clubs have struggled to survive and some haven't. Despite this, and with Kent reducing to 53 RFU voting clubs and around 10 affiliate members we are still one of the top six or seven Counties that has the highest number of clubs in England.

We enter 2024 as the Senior County Champions and despite Covid, eventually, last July, got our development squad at Senior level on tour in South Africa.

Taff Gwilliam our Representative DOR, organised coaching master classes for the Women's and Girls' Game and for the Men, some top professional coaches imparting their knowledge.

Guy Slater, one of our Senior County doctors, also organised the first - and very successful - Conference for our physios and medics. He is already well advanced in organising next year's event.

In the meantime, our clubs at RFU league level and in the Merit tables have worked hard to recruit and retain new players in an environment where it requires more squad players to get sides out because players want to turn out less regularly. The last couple of weeks at the Merit table level both in Met and Rural, are proving particularly difficult. Let's hope that after Christmas the improvement levels in game completion experienced in October and November return to the normal pattern.

And so to 2024, it is hoped for additional volunteers at club and County level, to the retention of the County Championship and to ensuring we lose no more Kent Clubs. We hope, too, that the 53 clubs still in action are able to retain or grow the number of sides currently being fielded.

We will be working alongside our RFU colleagues to ensure that we properly communicate the introduction of Adult player registration to go with the Age Grade system.

We will also be helping with a look at how the first two years of the Future Competition Structure changes have gone, including the introduction of lower sides to the RFU leagues.



I could highlight a range of further challenges and opportunities but don't want to take up too much of your Festive time.

I conclude by thanking all of our volunteers within the County set up, our RFU colleagues and Tracy for all her work. Thank you, too, to all our clubs' volunteers, for all you do to keep our great game alive helping it to recover.

A very Happy Christmas to all and a successful 2024 to all of our clubs and members in Kent

Roger Clarke
Kent County RFU (KCRFU) Executive Committee Chair.
RFU Council Member for Kent.

2. KENT COUNTY RFU U17 BOYS' PLAYER NOMINATIONS

The Kent County RFU (KCRFU) under-17 boys program is a representative program and nominations are requested in the new year. The online nominations window will be open from the 1st – 31st of January 2024, nominations after this date will not be considered. The assessment day will be held on the 15th Feb 2024 at Dartford Valley RFC, all details and the nomination online link can be found on our website **HERE**.

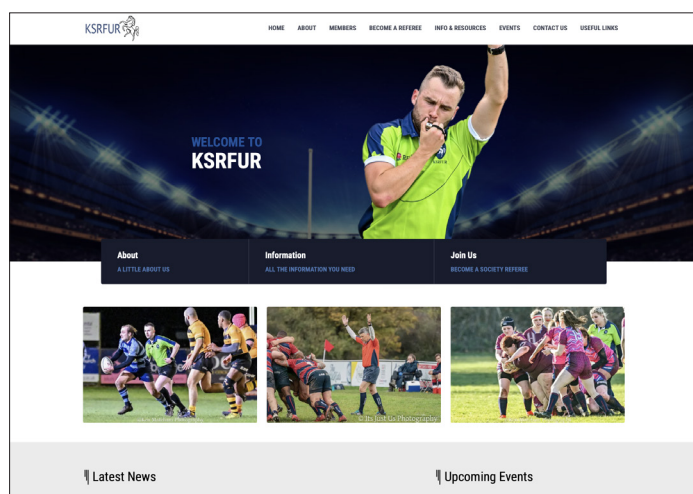
The assessment day will also be a chance to be assessed for the Saracens Player Development Group.

3. KENT COUNTY RFU ASSISTANT TREASURER NEEDED

KCRFU is looking for an assistant treasurer to assist in the management and control the fiscal and budgetary, commercial responsibilities of the Kent County Rugby Football Union. If you are interested in this voluntary, supportive role, please get in touch with Ben Ashby the Hon-Treasurer. hon-treasurer@kent-rugby.org. Deadline for applications Jan 8th 2024.

4. KENT REFEREES SOCIETY NEW WEBSITE

This December the Kent Referees Society is excited to launch a new website, **HERE**. Information can be found on the website to assist clubs on how to book a referee, how to become a referee course or how to use Who's The Ref system.



5. KENT COUNTY RFU SMALL GRANTS OFFER 2023-2024

Kent County RFU is providing several 'small grants' to support clubs wishing to encourage participation by improving their facilities.

Grant awards help contribute to the fundraising that clubs are already carrying out to support their respective improvement projects – even relatively small awards can provide an exponentially beneficial impact to clubs struggling to raise funding during these challenging times.

We can offer grants between £500 - £2,500 towards works that deliver improvements to either player or referee's experience at your club. An example might be that your club is considering utilising one of the current RFU offers,

found at; <https://www.englandrugby.com/participation/running-your-club/facilities/offers> or the grant could be utilised as part of an important club refurbishment project by providing additional funding.

To apply for a Kent County RFU Small Grant please complete our form and submit it to: office@kent-rugby.org copied to club-development-chair@kent-rugby.org (**download form HERE**)

Clubs are also reminded of the various financial support mechanisms that are made available by the RFU; <https://www.englandrugby.com/participation/running-your-club/funding> – and which the County's grants can complement.

Any Kent County RFU Small Grant award is dependent upon the applying club having submitted an up to date Club Audit Form.

For those clubs that have yet to complete the audit – or for those that wish to update their entry from last year below is the Club Audit Form

CLUB AUDIT LINK

NB: If you encounter any problems when completing the audit please contact rickbruin@rfu.com.

Further facilities support and information can be found on the RFU website at: **HERE**

6. ARTICLES FOR IN-TOUCH

Share your amazing community rugby stories at your club for our publication of In-Touch, publication Feb 2024.

Do not miss out on sharing your club news and be part of our publication of In-touch?

Please send written articles with any good quality (large size) images for possible inclusion in the publication by the to office@kent-rugby.org

7. CLUSTER MEETINGS: PRESENTATION ON AGE GRADE COMPLIANCE

The KCRFU recently completed its latest series of club cluster meetings, which we hope those club representatives who attended them found helpful and informative.

One of the sessions that was delivered by our RFU Club Developer, Mark Finnis was a presentation outlining the importance of clubs complying fully with the RFU Age Grade Regulations and the KCRFU's own online application system. We will in January circulate the presentation by email to Chairs, Youth Chairs, and Safeguarding Officers; it will also be placed on our website.

8. COUNTY OFFICE CLOSED

The Kent County RFU Office will be closed from Friday 22nd Dec - 8th Jan 2024. We wish you all a Very Happy Christmas and Happy New Year.