



Distribution list: **Tuesday 15 June**

Constituent Bodies Chairs, Honorary Secretaries, Treasurers,  
Club Presidents, Chairs, Honorary Secretaries, Treasurers

## Return to Rugby

**This edition includes:**

1. Government Step 4 update and what this means for rugby
2. Regulation changes approved by RFU Council, Friday 11 June
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## Government Step 4 and what this means for rugby

Following yesterday's announcement by the Prime Minister to delay Step 4 until Monday 19 July to enable more people to be vaccinated, we remain at Stage D2 on the rugby roadmap.

We will continue to hold discussions with government around when it will be possible to move to Stage E and full contact training.

In the meantime, we remind clubs and their members to follow all Covid-19 protocols and Stage D2 guidance. Please take particular care in light of the increase in Delta variant cases.

A reminder of Covid protocols and Stage D2 guidance can be found on the buttons below.

[Stage D2](#)

[Helpdesk FAQs](#)



## Regulation changes

Following the RFU Council meeting on Friday 11 June, we would like to make CBs and Clubs aware of two key regulation changes that will come into effect for the 2021/2022 season.

### Change to Age Grade Tackle Height – Regulation 15

As part of our continual evolution of player welfare initiatives, a law change to the tackle height in age grade rugby will come into effect from Sunday 1

August 2021.

The existing rules for those playing full contact rugby at U9 to U14 levels has an imagined line between the armpits as the maximum height of a legal tackle. This will continue.

Under the law change, these rules will now extend across all U15 to U18 age groups, bringing the tackle height down from shoulder level to the armpit. This means that age grade players from U9-U18 will play to the same tackle height law.

Players participating at U7 and U8 level will continue to play non-contact rugby.

Read more [here](#).

### **Changes to Regulation 9 and the related First Aid and Immediate Care Provision Guidelines for the new season:**

**Regulation 9.3** now includes that clubs **must** complete a risk assessment and ensure an appropriate level of immediate care and/or first aid cover and equipment is in place for the rugby activity to take place as determined by the risk assessment.

We also continue to highly recommended that clubs and other rugby activity providers comply with the RugbySafe First Aid/Immediate Care Provision Guidelines. A new version for the 2021-22 season will be available via the [RugbySafe page](#) next week, when further information will be sent to clubs and their RugbySafe Leads.

A webinar will also be held on Wednesday 30 June to go through the new First Aid/Immediate Care Provision guidelines for the 2021-22 season and to cover other areas within FA/IC provision, including the first aid risk assessment, facilities and equipment and first aid training.

You can register on the link below or in the webinar section.

[RugbySafe](#)

[Register](#)



## Season 2021/22 Community Funding

Covid-19 will continue to have a major impact on RFU revenues for 2021/22 and beyond, with spectator capacities at Twickenham still unknown. In addition to the impact in this upcoming year, we also continue the longer-term recovery from what was a very low revenue year in 2020/21. This continues to lead to tough decisions across the whole game and the RFU Board and Council have agreed a business plan that sees continued investment into the game, while also supporting recovery from what has been an incredibly difficult last 15 months. Even in these challenging times, we will continue to invest in excess of £20m into the community game, greater than the entire turnover of the majority of other national governing bodies of sport. The RFU Board has also committed to a six-month comprehensive in-year review should capacities increase beyond those budgeted for and should this happen we would look to increase this investment further.

Different ways of working have evolved over the past 12 months and, in many areas, this has helped to strengthen partnerships with, and between, CBs and clubs. We remain committed to building on this collective endeavour and to maximising the resources we have available to us.

### **Key Headlines**

- Club liability and catastrophic injury insurance will continue to be funded and provided centrally.
- The core element of PFR funding introduced in 2020/21 will continue into

2021/22. An additional £200k of funding will be provided to CBs to support local delivery of key RFU strategic objectives. Further detail will follow on this and we will look to increase this as this year progresses should the overall position improve.

- Funding for DPP will continue at the same levels as 2019/20. In addition to the funding paid to CBs for Age Grade Representative Rugby in 20/21 and carried forward due to no activity, an additional payment of £9.6k will be made to each CB to support the operation of this.

- Funding for volunteer management and leadership development will be re-instated, building on the previous successes with Leadership Academies and Leadership in Union.

- Recognising the necessity to ensure our pitches are ready for the return of rugby, continued and enhanced funding will be provided to support Rugby Grounds Connected.

- Match Officials at Levels 3-5 will continue to be deployed centrally and benefit from a national subsidy. Funding contributions from clubs will be charged at the same levels as 2019/20 - £3000 at L3, £1500 at L4 and £650 at L5.

- Funding for the Senior Men's & U20 and Women's County Championships will be considered once the current review group have reported on their findings and made their recommendations. Any funding will be decided upon by the Community Game Board who will assess this against contribution and relevance to the RFU strategic priorities.

- Funding to support merit table operation will be reinstated at the same levels as 2019/20.

- A dedicated budget for travel will be re-instated. However this will not be universally distributed to clubs. Support will be provided in two areas (1) to those onshore clubs having to travel offshore to fulfil league fixtures and (2) through a needs-based fund to support clubs most in need, further details on which will follow by the end of June.

- Operational budgets to reflect key areas of ongoing work will continue. While these are significantly smaller than in the pre Covid years we will seek to grow these back over time. Many of these are restricted as they are tied to external funding (e.g. Sport England). However, the Community Game Board will continue to focus on ensuring that any available resource is aligned closely to our strategic priorities.



## AGM - Friday 11 June

Thank you to everyone who attended and asked questions at Friday's virtual AGM. Over the coming weeks on [EnglandRugby.com](https://www.englandrugby.com) you will be able find a copy of the speeches made by RFU CEO Bill Sweeney and RFU President HH Jeff Blackett, alongside voting results and the AGM minutes.

During the AGM, RFU member clubs ratified:

- The decisions made by the RFU Board to appoint Tom Ilube CBE as successor to Chair, Andy Cosslett and Polly Williams to take over as Independent Non-Executive Director from Helen Weir. Both take up their new positions from Sunday 1 August.
- A decision, approved by Council Members in November 2020, to keep the Presidential team in their current positions for the 2021/22 season.

13 new Council Members, elected by their Constituent Bodies, were also presented to member clubs.

We would like to thank the outgoing Council Members who have been

instrumental in driving the game forward and extend a warm welcome to incoming members. We wish them the very best in their new roles.

[Read More](#)



## Women's Leagues & Fixtures Release 2021/22

The finalised women's league structure and fixture schedules for each of the leagues are available below. Please be aware that, as a result of feedback, some changes may have been made to your leagues from the provisional leagues.

This information will be sent tomorrow to clubs who have entered Women & Girls contact, Fixture Secretary (Adult Female) and Fixture Secretary Assistant (Adult Female) GMS roles. Feel free to share this with them today if you prefer.

The fixtures will go live on [englandrugby.com](http://englandrugby.com) once the Gallagher Premiership Final has taken place.

Please click the buttons below for fixtures and the final league structure. This **Map** shows teams within each league.

## Inner Warrior Series

Conversations will continue with your local Competition Organiser and/or Competitions Development Officer to ensure an appropriate format and fixture schedule for all teams involved in your local area.

If you have any queries, please contact [womenscompetitions@rfu.com](mailto:womenscompetitions@rfu.com).

[Fixtures PDF](#)

[League Structure PDF](#)



## Taxation of Business Support Grants

Further to the introduction of legislation on taxation of Coronavirus Business Support and Job Retention Scheme Grants, HMRC have published detailed guidance on how these new tax rules apply. The guidance is general in scope and does not address the special corporation tax rules which apply to members sports clubs. However, HMRC's position is that these grants are fully taxable whether a club has been liable to corporation tax in the past and filed returns or not.

We have produced an on-demand webinar which gives you an overview of the approach. There are some exceptions to the taxations, which can be found on the tax page below, which also includes where support can be found.

[On-Demand Webinar](#)

[Tax Page](#)



## Rugby Round Up

Below are other stories published recently that we would ask you to share further.

- We have sent **this video** to adult male players at level 2 and below to summarise the Future Competition Structure in simple terms. Please feel free to share this video more widely to help explain the changes to expect from September 2022, in a bid to help clubs retain players.
- On Friday 18 June, Constituent Bodies chairs, honorary secretaries, treasurers, club presidents, chairs, honorary secretaries, treasurers and data officers will receive notification of an update to GMS that will affect player data. If not done already, please can you make sure all roles are up-to-date.
- The **RFU's Safeguarding procedures** are regularly assessed externally by the Child Protection in Sport Unit, with the most recent report giving the Union the highest rating of very good in every aspect.
- Over the last couple of weeks, we have celebrated Volunteers' Week and UK Coaching Week. For stories and videos check **@EnglandRugby** on Twitter and the community section on [englandrugby.com/news](https://www.englandrugby.com/news).
- As we look back on coaching week, we wanted to shine a light on Giselle Mather who went from Red Rose #35 to coaching the first women's Barbarians team. You can **read more here**. We also spoke to former Bristol Women and England prop Sasha Acheson, who has joined the South West's first inclusive gay friendly rugby team, Bristol Bisons, as their head coach.  
**Read more**

- John Hilton, head coach of Windsor Dames, has been flying the flag for rugby having been selected as a finalist for the UK Coaching Hero. [Read more](#)

- Congratulations to Giles David Hilton, Chairman and Commercial Manager for Canterbury Rugby Football Club who has been awarded an MBE for services to Rugby Union Football in Kent. [Read more](#)

## Webinars and On-Demand Videos

### Webinars & videos on demand

All our [Coaching](#), [Refereeing](#), and [Club](#) webinars are on-demand, alongside the webinars coming up below.

#### **First aid and immediate care**

The next RugbySafe webinar on Wednesday 30 June will cover first aid and immediate care provision in clubs. This will include the new RFU guidelines recommend for pitch-side provision, equipment and facilities. We will also look at appropriate first aid qualifications and discuss what good practice looks like. You can join us live or watch on-demand afterwards.

[Register](#)

#### **Financial sustainability – Wednesday 23 June 6:30 – 8:30pm**

Although managing the day-to-day finances of your club can seem a daunting or tedious task, this workshop will support you to identify financial objectives that will help your club become more financially sustainable and resilient.

[Register](#)