



**17<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting**  
**North Midlands Rugby Football Union Limited**  
**7.00pm Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2021**

*(via Zoom Conferencing link as attached)*

**AGENDA**

1. **Notice convening the Meeting**
2. **Apologies**
3. **Minutes** of the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of The North Midlands Rugby Football Union Limited held on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2020.
4. **Correspondence**
5. **Annual Reports**
  - i. President
  - ii. Chairman
  - iii. Communications
  - iv. Governance
  - v. Club Support & Development
  - vi. Playing Development
  - vii. Finance
  - viii. RFU Council Representatives
6. **Election of Officers** for the Season 2021/2022
7. **Election of Management Committee** for the Season 2021/2022

**8. To Consider Any Other Business of which due notice has been given**

**8.1** Motion proposed by CEH for consideration.

**8.2** New Patron Application

**9** At the discretion of the President to hear any other relevant matter for consideration of the Committee during the ensuing year, but on which no voting shall be allowed.

An update from North Midlands Society of Rugby Football Referees

**10 Date of the next Annual General Meeting**

Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2022 (location to be confirmed)

***Enclosures***

*Committee reports*

*Nomination data*

**North Midlands Annual General Meeting - Zoom details**

When: Jun 23, 2021 07:00 PM London

Please register in advance for this meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMkce-prToiHtx-7QYBV3A-GqnYPMqN37Xg>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.



## 16<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of the North Midlands Rugby Football Union Limited

Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2020 @ 7:30pm

Online Zoom Meeting

**In attendance:** The list of attendees, of which there were 46 has been filed with the minutes (see Appendix 1). Clubs/Societies/DU's represented of which there were 18 has been filed with the minutes (see Appendix 2)

**Chair:** President Judith Phelps, (although due to unprecedented online AGM) Charlie Hemmings (CEH) North Midlands Chairman acted as 'Host'

**Minutes:** Sarah Wild

		Action
	CEH read out the protocol for the online meeting (already circulated with all the papers) for clarification. A minute's silence was held for Roy Taylor, (Past President of the North Midlands RFU). Stuart Potts (SP) gave a brief outline of his rugby history rising through the ranks. CEH displayed on the screen a copy of the Agenda (already circulated with all the papers) and ran through items for the meeting.	
1.	RB read out the calling notice convening the 16 <sup>th</sup> AGM meeting in accordance with Rule 8.	
2.	<b>Apologies:</b> See Appendix 3	
3.	<b>To consider and approve the minutes of the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of the North Midlands Rugby Football Union Limited held on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2019: -</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These have been circulated with all the papers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ No amendments</li> <li>○ Robin Davies (Bromsgrove) proposed and Roger Adams (Kings Norton) seconded.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The minutes of the last AGM were therefore taken as read and accepted and will be signed by Judith Phelps.</li> </ul>	
4.	<b>Correspondence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This was circulated in the AGM papers by RB – no questions raised.</li> </ul>	
5.	<b>Annual reports</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Presidents Report:</b> Written report submitted by JP, no further comments</li> <li>• <b>Chairman's Report</b> – Written report submitted by CEH, no further comments</li> <li>• <b>Treasurers report</b> – Written report submitted – RP, no further comments.</li> <li>• <b>Governance</b> – Stuart Potts – written report submitted by SP, no further comments.</li> <li>• <b>Club Support and Development</b> - written report submitted by KS, no further comments.</li> <li>• <b>Playing Development Group</b> – written report submitted by GW, no further comments.</li> <li>• <b>Finance</b> – written report submitted by RP, no further comments.</li> <li>• <b>RFU Council Representative</b> – Steve Guy /Paul Kaminski – written report submitted nothing to add.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Centenary Year</b> – written report submitted by SG</li> </ul>																																					
6.	<p><b>Election of Officers:</b></p> <p>The nominations for each position were addressed individually and an ‘online poll’ was displayed. North Midlands RFU reserve the right for 48hrs to verify these results.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Officers</th> <th>Nominee</th> <th>Nominated By</th> <th>Online Poll</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>President</td> <td>Judith Phelps</td> <td>Telford RFC</td> <td>92%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Chairman</td> <td>Charlie Hemmings</td> <td>Camp Hill RFC</td> <td>92%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Honorary Secretary</td> <td>Fiona Harris</td> <td>Hereford RFC</td> <td>92%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Honorary Treasurer</td> <td>Roger Parsons</td> <td>Edwardian RFC</td> <td>92%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>RFU Council Member</td> <td>Paul Kaminski</td> <td>Elected March 2020</td> <td>(no vote required)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>RFU Council Member</td> <td>Steve Guy</td> <td>Elected March 2019</td> <td>(no vote required)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Senior Vice President</td> <td>Gordon Wood</td> <td>Newport RFC</td> <td>88%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Junior Vice President</td> <td>Bill Worth</td> <td>Yardley &amp; District RFC</td> <td>92%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Officers	Nominee	Nominated By	Online Poll	President	Judith Phelps	Telford RFC	92%	Chairman	Charlie Hemmings	Camp Hill RFC	92%	Honorary Secretary	Fiona Harris	Hereford RFC	92%	Honorary Treasurer	Roger Parsons	Edwardian RFC	92%	RFU Council Member	Paul Kaminski	Elected March 2020	(no vote required)	RFU Council Member	Steve Guy	Elected March 2019	(no vote required)	Senior Vice President	Gordon Wood	Newport RFC	88%	Junior Vice President	Bill Worth	Yardley & District RFC	92%	
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8.	<p><b>Any other business</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We have to send a North Midlands Representative to MDOC. Current Chairman is PK and Roger Rees is Hon Secretary and if they are re-elected, Bill Worth will be put forward again to represent North Midlands – if anyone else would like to be considered for nomination, please let Fiona Harris (FH) know by 1<sup>st</sup> July 2020.</li> <li>JP said a few words on behalf of the North Midlands RFU to thank both Keith Skirving and Robert Bray who are both standing down and thanked them both for their commitment, support and contribution over the years. A presentation (when able) will be organised. A huge thank you was given. RB / KS both thanked everyone for their kind words.</li> <li>Ratification of a rule change (this was displayed on the screen) – Committee name changes to be updated. Change from ‘Youth Forum’ to Age Grade Sub Committee and ‘Community’ to Club Support and Development – this was passed by a ‘virtual’ thumbs up on the screen. Further discussions were held on where this should report BB suggest Playing Development rather than Governance (MS (chairman elect of this committee) suggested to discuss this at another meeting.</li> <li>KF (Bredon Star) – sent in question regarding subscriptions for this coming season in light of Covid-19 and what financial support was available for clubs. Various replies from clubs, most are waiting to see what happens. SG suggested local government grants and North Midlands have Covid Grant - please contact Roger Parsons. Scott Sturdy suggested 3 options for membership: A goodwill gesture</li> </ul>																																					

	<p>and for those members who can afford it to pay 100% membership fees, 2<sup>nd</sup> option reduced season membership (date not known yet for return) on a pro-rata basis, 3<sup>rd</sup> option hardship package qualifying for deferred membership.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KR – North Midlands Referees Society (proposal displayed on screen) – Please can you let your Junior sections know about a couple of Webinars that will be running in July for YMO’s which will be led by Michael Patz.</li> <li>• Don Howell – Shropshire RFU AGM is on the 28<sup>th</sup> September 2020 – further details to follow</li> <li>• RB – has anyone had any contact with Daren Clegg.</li> <li>• RP – my door is open for any clubs requesting help with Covid-19 emergency support fund.</li> <li>• PK – update will be coming out next week regarding the Leagues for next season – fixtures will be rolling depending on when the season starts subject to Government guidelines.</li> <li>• SG thanked all the clubs that have contributed towards the Centenary Charity (70% of clubs) and thanks given to KS for all his hard work.</li> </ul>	
<p>9.</p>	<p><b>Date of next meeting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be advised</li> <li>• Meeting closed at <b>8:19 pm</b></li> </ul>	

## **Appendix 1**

### **List of Attendees:**

Roger Adams - Kings Norton RFC	Moira Boot – North Midlands RFU
Bee Banister – North Midlands Schools	Richard Brookes – Kings Norton
Robert Bray – North Midlands Hon Secretary	Colin Gardner – Old Saltleians RFC
Brian Chappelhow – Edwardians RFC	Rae Evans – Church Stretton RFC
Robin Davies – Bromsgrove RFC	Clare Foster – North Midlands RFU
Robin Edwards – Stourbridge RFC	Karen Gibbons – Camp Hill RFC
Stephen Franklin – Bournville RFC	John Griffiths – DK
Peter Grace – Five Ways Old Edwardians RFC	Clive Haley – North Midlands RFU
Steve Guy – North Midlands RFU	Malcolm Harris – Hereford
Fiona Harris – North Midlands RFU / Hereford	Stephen Hindson – Redditch RFC
Trevor Humphrey – W&H DU	Warren Howell – Oswestry RFC
Paul Kaminski – North Midlands RFU	Peter Jordan – North Midlands RFU
Stephen Miskin – W&H DU	Phil Knowles – Kidderminster RFC
Roger Parsons – North Midlands RFU	Andrew McGrann – North Midlands RFU
Stuart Potts – North Midlands RFU	Michael Palmer – Bournville RFC
John Richards – Moseley Oak RFC	Judith Phelps – North Midlands RFU
Liz Rochelle – Bridgnorth RFC	Martyn Powis – Camp Hill RFC
Tim Sherrey – Old Halesonians RFC	Kelvin Roberts – North Midlands Ref's
John Slim – Stourbridge Lions / W&H DU	Mike Sampson – North Midlands RFU
David Summerfield – Evesham RFC	Keith Skirving – North Midlands RFU
Sarah Wild – North Midlands RFU	Scott Sturdy – RFU
Bill Worth – North Midlands RFU	Simon Thompson – Kings Norton
	Gordon Wood – North Midlands RFU

## **Appendix 2**

### **Clubs Represented:**

Kings Norton	Moseley Oak
Edwardians	Bridgnorth
Bromsgrove	Old Halesonians
Olds Salts	Church Stretton
Camp Hill	Hereford
Bournville	W & H DU
Stourbridge	North Midlands Ref's Society
Dudley Kingswinford	Redditch
Oswestry	Evesham
Five Ways Old Edwardians	

### **Appendix 3**

#### **Apologies:**

Ralph Gordon	W&H DU
Kevin Favley	Bredon Star
Jon Harrison	Yardley & District
Don Howell	Shropshire DU
Giles Alton	Shropshire DU / Shrewsbury
Simon Harris	Newport
Graham Hitchco	Harbourne RFC
Paul Marshall	Greyhound RFC
Stuart Eades	RFU (Furlough)



## North Midlands RFU – AGM 2021 – Elections

Officers	Nominee	Proposed By	Accepted in Writing
President	Judith Phelps	Telford Hornets RFC	Email Confirmation
Chairman	Charlie Hemmings	Fiona Harris N Mids RFU	Email Confirmation
Senior Vice President	Gordon Wood	Newport Salop RFC	Email Confirmation
Junior Vice President	Bill Worth	Yardley & District RFC	Email Confirmation
Honorary Secretary	Fiona Harris	Hereford RFC	Email Confirmation
Honorary Treasurer	Roger Parsons	Edwardian RFC	Email Confirmation
RFU Council Rep	Charlie Hemmings	Elected March 2021	N/A
RFU Council Rep	Paul Kaminiski	Elected March 2020	N/A

## Management Committee Membership

Chair of Governance	Stuart Potts	Telford RFC	Email Confirmation
Chair of Playing Development	Clare Foster	Bromsgrove RFC	Email Confirmation
Chair of Club Support & Development	Andrew McGrann	Charlie Hemmings	Email Confirmation





# REPORT TO NMRFU AGM ON 23<sup>RD</sup> JUNE 2021

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The very nature of the 2020-2021 season means this report will be a brief affair!

One of the tasks ascribed to the President is to write condolence letters to clubs and families of volunteers who have died. Sadly, that part of the role didn't stop.

By comparison it has been great to be able to write letters of congratulation in recent weeks. To Jonny Hill – ex Luctonians – on being selected for the Lions touring squad to South Africa. Also, to Craig Browne of Droitwich RFC who was awarded the British Empire Medal in the Queen's Birthday Honours list. He and other volunteers at the club spent many hours during lock down organising food supplies to distribute to homes in the local area. Well done both of you.

One welcome event just recently was to meet up with other members of the Centenary organising group to present a cheque for £30,000 to Jill Douglas, representing the My Name's 5 Doddie Foundation. Looking back over the shortened Centenary season, the clubs of North Midlands did themselves proud in how they joined in with the fundraising. So, although we missed our target it was still a significant amount to donate, and that despite so many key events having to be cancelled.

It was a huge privilege for me to be President during the Centenary season. And obviously a huge disappointment I was not able to continue my commitment to the role for the rest of that season and indeed hardly at all during 2020-2021 season. I have so missed meeting all the great rugby volunteers around the clubs. Certainly, I have not been able to get anywhere near my aim of visiting you all at least once.

Kings Norton RFC recently kindly wrote to the North Midlands RFU committee querying if it would be possible for me to have an extension to my time as President. Following discussions, we have reached a proposal to possibly give me a little more time in the role. Obviously subject to approval at the AGM, I will stand for President once again, but on the understanding, I will step down at the end of December 2021 – when Senior Vice President Gordon Wood will 'take the helm'. Here's hoping there isn't a 3<sup>rd</sup> lockdown to scupper that proposal!

So, a huge thank you for the warm welcome from all the clubs I did manage to visit. Being your President has been the highlight of my involvement in rugby. Whenever I step down, I'm not actually going very far and I'm sure in supporting my own club – Telford Hornets RFC and the North Midlands teams – I will meet many of you again.

**Judith Phelps**  
**June 2021**



# REPORT TO NMRFU AGM ON 23<sup>RD</sup> JUNE 2021

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

To plagiarize HM The Queen “Annus Horribilis” can be the only description for the past 12 months from not only a rugby perspective but also from the impact that Covid 19 has had on many of our lives.

I have reported in previous AGM commentaries that *we all appear consumed in a time of rapid change and future uncertainty* and whilst we are all no doubt enthused by a hopeful impending return to some normality in many aspects of our lives, we do have to have faith and hope that the well informed and practical foresight of both our North Midlands Council Representatives who voted against FCS proposals are at best misguided as Clubs prepare for the impact and implementation of the newly approved Future Competitions Structure in 2022/23.

I take the opportunity to add my thanks to all my North Midlands Committee colleagues for their contribution and for continuing to remain as positive and constructive as possible over the extended lockdown periods. Communication has been a challenge and necessitated and accelerated the pathway to change towards what has now become the accepted ‘norm’ of virtual meetings.

It is pleasing, encouraging and gratifying that almost every North Midlands Club engaged with North Midlands endeavours to maintain contact with Clubs to help ensure they were sufficiently resilient to weather the prevailing uncertainties.

Despite the crippling financial challenges facing Clubs it was particular pleasing to ascertain and confirm our understanding that, with the benefit of the majority of Clubs longstanding and resourceful management, the lack of commercial activities did not result in insurmountable financial challenges.

Nevertheless, in the light of an RFU matched grant funding of £18k North Midlands agreed to make available a £100k Immediate Support Fund resource pot. North Midlands supported 21 Clubs with grant awards totaling just over £52k to help them overcome this difficult period. The ‘pot’ is now closed following the conclusion of the Government backed Winter Sports Survival grant package which saw £723k, in varying amounts, distributed between 22 North Midlands Clubs.

Despite the valiant efforts of Steve Guy and Keith Skirving it was disappointing, albeit wholly understandable and unavoidable, that North Midlands Centenary celebrations ‘died on the vine’ with the intended concluding Gala Centenary Celebration Dinner having to be cancelled.

Regardless of the formidable obstacles' congratulations, commendation and thanks must go to both Steve and Keith for their commitment and fortitude. Also, a huge thank you to all the contributing Clubs which supported various ventures and enabled North Midlands to make a donation of £30k to the Doddie Weir Foundation supporting Motor Neuron Disease.

Time moves on and new and challenging changes lie ahead. We are in the throes, with Clubs requested input, of preparing an updated North Midlands Action Plan (at the time of scribing to be presented at this AGM!) in line with the recently published RFU Strategic Plan 2021 Onwards.

As we move forward into an 'uncertain' future North Midlands RFU overall objective remains to ensure we align with the vision **to support the development and sustainability of Clubs and the growth of rugby in North Midlands**. Change is to be welcomed and encouraged although with The Game having such a rich and deep history and tradition we can, hopefully, **preserve the best from the past and choose carefully changes for the future**.

Following my announcement of my intention at last year's AGM, I am humbled and excited, in equal measure, that at the expiry of my longstanding friend and colleague, Steve Guy's tenure as RFU Council Representative for North Midlands CB I have been duly appointed as his successor. Since my introduction to North Midlands in the 1980s I remain, as ever, committed in my desire to help, encourage, promote and support all Rugby and, in particular, those Clubs in North Midlands.

My whole hearted intention was to find a successor to the role of North Midlands Chair, however, this challenge appears to have been thwarted for many reasons. I have offered North Midlands Committee my willingness to continue in office, holding joint roles, if it is considered appropriate. I have no illusion that should Clubs support this course of action it will be onerous and potentially too demanding although I will 'give it my best shot' whilst I continue my search for a willing and capable replacement at the 2022 AGM.

With regards and thanks for your continuing support.

**Charlie Hemmings**  
**North Midlands RFU, Chairman**



# REPORT TO NMRFU AGM ON 23<sup>RD</sup> JUNE 2021

## COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

Well!! What a start to a new job, COVID was not on the to do list, but we did it. Communications became the star of the show and thanks to my colleagues, Sarah Wild and Alice Spillman we managed to get through it. Never before has our Website, Twitter account or Facebook page been used so much. We do urge you to send us all your activities for the coming season so that we can make our communications even better, we love seeing your stories and the events you have held during this torrid time.

We, the North Midlands RFU recognizes the value of good communications and the inability to hold traditional Committee meetings seemed a hinderance but turned out quite well. More people from our clubs attended the AGM in 2020 than ever before, thank you. Unfortunately, one of the criteria of contacting you all is we obviously require email addresses, contact numbers etc. and for this we rely on data taken from the RFU GMS system.

Yes, we know that it is a hated portal but unfortunately, it is what we must live with. So should the information be incorrect for any reason we have problems straightaway. Please, as soon as there are any changes to personnel in your club can you make sure that details are updated, as well as letting the Honorary Secretary know.

After last year's AGM when many of you said there was too much communication, we sent Emails and our weekly newsletters from the North Midlands RFU to your Honorary Secretary, as well as the Chair, we are now setting up a WhatsApp group for Junior Chairs, so relevant information can be disseminated to them as well. The CB is aware of its responsibilities under GDPR and will be continuing to seek help and guidance going forward to ensure compliance.

Please remember that the Honorary Secretary should be your primary source of contact within the CB. There is a legal status bestowed on the post holder, and it is fundamentally important that this individual knows what is going on as well as being a point of reference.

Having had a very mixed year with lots of challenges thrown at myself and my team let us hope that the coming season calms down, and we find ourselves back in the position of playing rugby.

Yours

**Fiona Harris**  
**Hon. Secretary North Midlands RFU**

# SHARE WITH US!

North Midlands RFU are looking to improve the way we engage with our clubs on social media! Help us to help you by sharing your social media posts with us.

1. Make sure to follow us on Facebook and Twitter @NorthMidsRFU
2. Tag us in your posts! If we like what you post, we will share it to our followers. Please tag us in posts rather than sending messages.
3. If you like what we post, return the favour and give us a share!





# North Mids Social Media: June 2020 - June 2021

## Top Tweet:



TWITTER  
Followers: 2,447  
Tweets: 241

**Top Tweet** earned 16K impressions

North Midlands RFU presented [@JillADouglas](#) CEO of My Name's Doddie Foundation a cheque for £30,000 which was raised from fund-raising initiatives throughout their clubs.

For the full article, please pop over to the North Midlands Website - [northmidsrfu.co.uk/north-midlands...](http://northmidsrfu.co.uk/north-midlands...)

[@MNDoddie5](#) [pic.twitter.com/ibJz3DJg5U](https://pic.twitter.com/ibJz3DJg5U)



3 replies 17 retweets 104 likes

## Top Post:



FACEBOOK  
Followers: 785  
Posts: 136

**North Midlands RFU**  
30 November 2020 · 🌐

Today's news from the RFU. More to follow tomorrow. Watch this space. Following Government's announcement last week that outdoor team sport can resume from Wednesday 2 December, we are delighted to confirm that Government has today approved our submission to return to 15-a-side contact rugby, with some adaptations. Further detail on these adaptations and associated laws will follow tomorrow. However, they are briefly summarised below:... [See more](#)

🌱 **Get more likes, comments and shares**  
When you boost this post, you'll show it to more people.

**8,419** People reached      **1,592** Engagements      [Boost post](#)

👍👍👍 Avon With Becca, Ki Ngy and 42 others      11 Comments 39 shares





# REPORT TO NMRFU AGM ON 23<sup>RD</sup> JUNE 2021

## GOVERNANCE REPORT

I have received a notification that there has been a report of Referee abuse which necessitated the official leaving the field and abandoning the game. The Referee's Society is holding an enquiry and will report at a later date.

An interview panel has been formulated to appoint a new Chairman of the Disciplinary Panel and will report as and when the interviews have taken place.

### **RugbySafe**

Approximately 2/3 of clubs in North Midlands have a RugbySafe lead recorded on GMS. Those clubs that don't may be missing out on important communication and assistance. As the new season picks up a RugbySafe audit will need to be completed.

There have been some changes with RugbySafe within England Rugby. Simply Health are now sponsoring the scheme, and the guidance and advice is being revamped. As a result of COVID all club support queries are being consolidated into a single point of e-mail support [clubsupport@rfu.com](mailto:clubsupport@rfu.com).

### **Emergency First Aid in Rugby Union**

The COVID Secure courses have only been able to be run since the beginning of June, and some clubs have taken up the offer. A reminder to all clubs that appropriate first aid provision will be mandatory for Age Grade Rugby for the 22/23 season.

We are still waiting for the latest guidelines to be published which will then inform clubs what their requirements will be for the forthcoming seasons.

## **ACTIVATE**

This is England Rugby's s injury prevention exercise programme. Given the time off from rugby for many players, this will be an essential part in getting people safely back into playing. Age Grade Rugby training session lengths are going to be increased to allow 15 minutes of Activate (or similar) to occur. For more details visit <https://www.englandrugby.com/participation/coaching/activate>

## **Coming Season**

The aim of the coming season will be to support clubs getting ready for the mandatory first aid coverage, and to support the increased uptake of Activate across all areas of the game.

**Stuart Potts**



# REPORT TO NMRFU AGM ON 23<sup>RD</sup> JUNE 2021

## CLUB SUPPORT & DEVELOPMENT REPORT

As we say good bye to a year that we all would like to forget and clubs have been closed for the best part of 12 months because of Covid restrictions.

We at the North Midlands have offered support via our Immediate Covid Support Fund which we were able to support approximately 3rd of our clubs. For the majority of last year the RFU pulled most of their funding due to Covid but we are in talks with the RFU about restarting development projects for Clubs again and also which is Great news, funding for volunteer management and leadership development is being re-instated, and as soon as I have more information we will relay to all the clubs.

We have also started a committee this year which consists of all the 3 DU presidents and representatives for Ladies and Girls Rugby, Volunteers, Facilities. These meetings are to better understand the 3 counties issues and success and are held quarterly.

As restrictions are stated to be lifted and clubs start to re-open for training and sociable events we at the North Midlands wish you all the best for the forthcoming season and we look forward to visiting you all again.

**Andrew McGrann**



# REPORT TO NMRFU AGM ON 23<sup>RD</sup> JUNE 2021

## PLAYING DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Thanks to the Covid Pandemic, not a lot has been able to happen and may not happen until September 2021 however, please see below an update:

1. Cup Competitions Steve Franklin – clubs have been canvassed regarding their wish to participate in the NM Cup next season. This may be the last one subject to what is decided with regards to a National Cup.
2. NMCL Colts League – John Griffiths – Subject to COVID, it is envisaged that rugby will return for the U18 teams in September. There has been a number of clubs showing interest in the U19 proposal however due consideration will need to be made with regards to safe guarding.
3. Coaching – Ian Strangwood – nothing to report for the moment and unlikely that anything will commence until September when COVID allows.
4. North Midlands Schools – Bee Bannister – nothing to report.
5. North Midlands U16 – Rae Evans – nothing to report.
6. North Midlands U18s - Michael Sampson – nothing to report.
7. North Midlands U20s – TBC – nothing further to report than mentioned below by Charlie.
8. North Midlands Senior Men – Charlie Hemmings – The County Championship Review Group is in progress with the eventual outcomes likely to affect the Senior Men & Women's and Under 20's Competitions. I surmise that any 'change' will not be implemented until the 22/23 season and assume that the existing format will be reinstated for the 21/22 season although no detail has to date been released. When 'facts' are established a Management Team, including the appointment of a new coach, will be assembled to fulfil North Midlands obligations.
9. North Midlands Women – nothing to report.

**Clare Foster**  
**Chair of Playing Development**



# REPORT TO NMRFU AGM ON 23<sup>RD</sup> JUNE 2021

## FINANCE REPORT

With the North Midlands financial year concluding on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021, there will not be a finance report at the main AGM. A full Financial Report and accounts, as always, will be presented at the Financial AGM in September.

### **Dispensation of the need for an external Audit**

**Resolution:** In accordance with Rule 8.1.6.2 Members approval is requested to dispense with the appointment of an Auditor and the requirement for Audit to be undertaken.

Member clubs will recall that the annual subscription of £100 was waived for the 2020/2021 season, this subscription will however be reinstated for the 2021/2022 season.

**Roger Parsons**  
**Hon Treasurer, North Midlands RFU**



# REPORT TO NMRFU AGM ON 23<sup>RD</sup> JUNE 2021

## RFU COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

My good colleague, Steve Guy has submitted his own and final report to the AGM and I would not wish to double up upon his excellent summation of the season 2020/2021 at the RFU. However, I will join Steve in adding my thanks to the Executive and the staff of the RFU for their superlative support of our community clubs throughout the period of the Pandemic. He is spot on too, in noting the outstanding contribution of our clubs and their Officials. "Playing a blinder" is about as apt a description as I could use. At the start of the Pandemic, there was a general fear within the Game that many clubs would go under. Thankfully, this has not materialised and it was reported at last Friday's Council meeting that not a single club in England had gone out of business thus far. No more than a handful are reporting the likelihood of not being able to raise a team come September. Government, RFU and CB assistance has helped, but the lack of failure has been largely due to the efforts, skills and financial acumen of our club leaderships. Our Sport is deeply indebted.

There are clearly and inevitably, concerns for the future. We cannot be certain of how full a complement of players will return to active participation, but I believe we can have some optimism on that score.

There is also room for optimism at the professional end of the Game. Although negotiations are still ongoing, there does seem to be a meeting of minds on the way forward. This will be voted upon by Council at the end of this month. Steve and I, along with Charlie, will continue to monitor progress before deciding the direction of our votes. It is sufficient to say that, at this point we have our "red lines" and will be guided accordingly.

Looking to the future, I do have some concerns. The co-operation and assistance of Government over the year has been magnificent and fully appreciated. It will continue to be necessary for future projects, such as a prospective bid for the Women's World Cup. However, we should be cautious about becoming too close. The RFU is not a sub branch of the Department for Sport, obliged to jump at its every diktat. The health of Rugby football may not always be paramount in governmental circles. The game needs to maintain its independence.

Moving on slightly from that, there is to be a “Review of the RFU as a NGB (Non- Governmental Body)”. I am unsure when the game acquired the NGB title, but in my view the RFU has always been a co-operative of its clubs. Maybe it’s just terminology, but to me there is an essential difference between the two. This seems the latest in a long line of inward looking RFU Governance reviews and after each one Council and thereby democratic accountability is ever reduced. Whilst at present this may not be too concerning with the quality and the standing of the current executive leadership beyond reproach. It is always a possibility (as has occurred in the past) that this will not continue to be the case. The proof of the strength of the RFU’s governance will only become apparent when the Game is in trouble. We continue to weaken it at our peril.

Virtual meetings have become normal. They have been necessary and convenient, but are arguably a poor substitute for face to face communication. Without a doubt, many meetings will continue to take place virtually, but the return of live meetings will soon arrive along with the burden of travel that goes with them.

It has been reported that many of the RFU staff based at Twickenham would prefer to continue working from home. This is understandable, but is it desirable? With the redundancies made over the last few years, the RFU has lost many of its most experienced, staff members. We are left with a relatively young and untested cohort. For the benefit of the game and their own personal development, they need to be working in a communal setting and in direct contact with the volunteer sector.

The financial position of the RFU is reported to be sound. The RFU, as opposed to its clubs has received no funding from the Government. Despite this, it has not needed to call upon a significant proportion of the funds made available by its bankers at the beginning of the Pandemic. Nevertheless, there has clearly been a major decline in income, meaning a consequential loss of funding going to the Community Game. This is likely to be the case for some time, and always dependent on the return to normality.

As these matters and others develop, I will further report on them to our N Midlands Committee.

On a personal note and on behalf of North Midlands, may I offer my congratulations to Steve Guy on being elected a Distinguished Member of the Rugby Football Union. This is a great honour and few will have deserved it more. Steve has represented the clubs of North Midlands without fear or favour or for any personal aggrandisement. Steve has never wavered from holding the RFU to account. Whenever Steve raises his hand during a meeting you can almost sense the apprehension. There is the usual preamble with Steve stating how he is but a simple country lad, only for the following verbal thrust to directly penetrate its target. He will be missed – by some more than others!

My sincere thanks must go to Steve for the help and assistance he has given me during my time on Council. Although each new council member is allocated an official mentor for their first season on Council, in reality Steve was my mentor. His help and advice has been freely given and really appreciated and I thank him for it.

I believe myself and Steve have made a good team and in a similar manner, I look forward to working with Charlie Hemmings who takes office officially on the 1<sup>st</sup> August. Charlie, congratulations upon your election.

Finally, my thanks to the clubs of North Midlands, to the DU Committees and to the North Midlands Committee for their continued support.

**Paul Kaminski**  
**RFU Council Rep**





# REPORT TO NMRFU AGM ON 23<sup>RD</sup> JUNE 2021

RFU COUNCIL REP REPORT STEVE GUY

An extraordinary year in all our lives, a season dominated by the Coronavirus Pandemic, I commented on this in last year's AGM report, I believed then that we were through the worst and life would return to normal, how wrong could I have been?

RFU council has not met physically for 15 months; the advances in virtual meetings throughout The Game and the country are astounding and are now the accepted norm, Elite rugby played in empty stadiums, with small crowds only just allowed to return, no league rugby played in the community game, rugby clubs whose facilities still lie dormant. A scenario that could be construed as all doom and gloom but what shone through has been the resilience and strength of The Rugby community, This has been led from the top by the efforts of The RFU in highlighting the importance of our sport to Her Majesty Government; they convinced them of the essential financial support, (through grants and loans) that was needed to sustain clubs in their hour of need, unprecedented funding has been distributed and I applaud the work of RFU and its leadership. North Mids have also contributed in this respect with substantial loans and grants from its reserves, Having mentioned the importance financial aspect, the other driving factor has been the remarkable work of the volunteers in the clubs, not only in our CB but also throughout the country, it was commented on at the recent RFU AGM that there was no club that had failed, a truly astonishing statistic, achieved only by the dedication and commitment of rugby volunteers to succeed and ensure their club will survive and comeback stronger.

The business of The RFU has continued through the season, items to note are;

**The Restructure of staff**, a major redundancy programme has taken place, the local delivery staffs is now in place and a growing relationship and understanding with CB is coming to the fore  
**Future Competitions Structure (FCS)** has been agreed and will be implemented season starting 2022/23 this has been well documented, Paul and myself have led consultations and kept clubs fully informed throughout the 18 months (sometimes laborious) lengthy process.

**Structure of Professional rugby and minimum standards criteria.** in lay man's terms promotion relegation issues between the premiership and championship, Paul and myself are confined by confidentiality and are unable to comment, what we can say is that we have been heartened by the consultations with council so far, at a recent meeting all parties, Premiership Club Owners(2) Premier League Chair, Premiership Players Union rep, Championship Clubs Chair met council virtually, this is the first time this has been achieved, there seemed to be a consensus of opinion within the group to seize

the opportunity to speak openly, understand different points of view and the importance to The Game to try strike a deal and put proposals forward to council to consider. There is a council meeting scheduled for Tuesday morning 29<sup>th</sup>.June if needed.

**Senior Officers of RFU for 2021/22** have not changed from previous season due to Covid, President Jeff Blackett, Senior VP: Nigel Gillingham, Junior VP; Rob Briers.

**On a personal note**, I am at the end of my term of office as RFU Council rep.9 years have flown by, I would like to thank Paul Kaminski and Stuart Potts for their unstinting loyalty, support and friendship during my period on Council,

Charlie now takes on the mantle, he is totally committed to North Mids. and rugby in general, he will make an outstanding Council Member, alongside Paul they will make a formidable team ensuring North Mids. and Community rugby's voice will be heard at HQ.

I have also decided to retire from all committee work and rugby bodies, nothing sinister, for the record I am in good health, no political fall outs! I believe this is the right time, "time and tide wait for no man" I pay tribute to all the various colleagues I have served with throughout the years, but most of all the people and clubs, who have put their faith and trust in me to represent them,

I have been incredibly fortunate to be part of this wonderful Rugby County, North Midlands RFU and its clubs encompass all that is good about The Game, I will look back with fond and everlasting memories of the people, the friendships and of course the enjoyment.

**Steve Guy**