



Rugby Football Union  
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[englandrugby.com](http://englandrugby.com)

9 April 2021

Dear Council Member, CB Chair, Honorary Secretary, Treasurer,

### **COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP WORKING GROUP**

As you will be aware, the Community Game Board (CGB) commissioned a review of the County Championship across the senior men's, men's U20 and senior women's competitions.

A small working group has been established, involving County officials and Council members.

#### **Its Terms of Reference are:**

1. To review the County Championship across both the Men's and Women's Senior Competition and the U20s Men's Competition and to make recommendations to the Community Game Board regarding the future and the format of the competition.
2. To investigate and report on the role and purpose behind the competition.
3. To investigate, report and comment on how the County Championship (both Men's, Women's & U20s) supports and extends the recruitment and retention of players, coaches, match officials and volunteers within the Community Game.
4. To investigate, report and comment on whether the County Championship at all levels supports and extends the player performance pathway.
5. To review the current financial modelling for the competitions including both central RFU funding and CB contributions.
6. Within the scope of the above, to take any lessons learned from previous reviews which may have been undertaken.
7. To investigate and report how other Unions and other sports provide representative opportunities within their community offerings.

#### **Scope**

Community Game (both men & women) at level 3 and below and to consider the Men's U20 and Senior Championships and the Women's Senior Championship.

#### **Membership**

A review group has been set up with the following membership:

Tim Miller Chair – RFRU Council Rep

Jim Chapman – Yorkshire Council Rep

Maria Crowfoot – Ex RFU Youth Council, Men's University and Women's coach

Helen Duggan – Women's and Girls lead, Lancashire RFU

Simon Cruise – RFU Competitions Operations Manager

Eddie Keal – Chairman, Middlesex RFU

Magnus Leask – Senior coach for Northumberland and Novocastrians

Kirsty Marlor – Royal Navy Council Rep

Alan Milliner – Cornwall Council Rep

Filipe Saldanha – RFU Competitions Administrator

Dick Tyler – Cambridge University Council Rep

Rugby Football Union a society established under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 with registered number IP27981R whose registered office is at the above address.

The Task Group may co-opt any individuals that they deem necessary to the outcome of the Review. This may be on a permanent or ad-hoc basis.

### **Research**

The working group, supported by the RFU Insights team, is currently putting the final touches to an electronic survey for players, coaches, match officials and club and CB volunteers which we would be grateful if you would draw your member clubs' attention to. A short update will be included in the club version of this week's Community Game Update to advise of the survey to expect on Monday.

This note is being circulated to CB Chairs, Honorary Secretaries, Treasurers and Council Members. In addition, information will be distributed over the next week via GMS and will be published on the England Rugby website. Alongside this, we will be hosting sessions with groups of CBs to explore their views in more detail. We do hope you will be able to participate in these events, details of which will be sent out shortly.

### **Timescale**

The electronic survey will be issued on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> April. We anticipate that the research work will be completed in late May, with feedback being submitted to the CGB at its June meeting with the full report issued in October after a further follow-up round of discussions. Depending on Council's reaction, it is envisaged that an implementation group would be formed to draft regulations and communications to our counties thereafter.

### **Your Input**

Naturally, the Review Group would welcome all insights and thoughts from Constituent Bodies and their member clubs as well as Council members which can be sent to [competitions-development@rfu.com](mailto:competitions-development@rfu.com).

We have received a considerable amount of interest already, including formal papers from a number of Constituent Bodies - Cheshire, Cornwall, Dorset & Wilts, Gloucestershire, Kent, Lancashire (including a video), Staffordshire and Yorkshire. We are grateful for their early feedback and constructive thoughts. We welcome responses from all CBs on this important subject. We have also received a number of helpful individual submissions to go alongside the 'formal' papers.

To help understand the current investment levels it would be helpful if you could complete the attached excel document to illustrate current commitments to supporting the competitions, in addition to the financial support the RFU currently provides. Please be assured this information, as it relates to specific counties, will not be shared outside of the review group.

Finally, we would very much welcome feedback from coaches and other county volunteers. I can be reached on [timiller@rfu.com](mailto:timiller@rfu.com) if you wish to discuss further.

Thank you in advance for your support.

**Best regards**

**Dr Tim Miller**

RFRU Council Rep  
Chair of County Championship Working Group