



COMMUNITY GAME UPDATE

Distribution list: **Tuesday 01 September**

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

Coronavirus (Covid-19) update

Please find below the thirty-eighth edition of our coronavirus (Covid-19) update.

We have provided an update on the move to Stage D on the Return to Community Rugby Roadmap and, as promised, the latest update (Tuesday 1 September) on adult and age-grade competitions.

Please visit our dedicated web portal on the England Rugby website to access coronavirus information and updates [here](#).

Past editions of these weekly updates can be found on this part of the website. Click [here](#) if you need to find a previous edition.



RFU headlines

Community Rugby – moved to stage D

With the exception of clubs impacted by local lockdown restrictions, effective today, Tuesday 1 September, we have moved to **Stage D** on the **Return to Community Rugby Roadmap**. Clubs are now able to organise non-contact fixtures with other clubs using **Ready4Rugby** and other touch rugby activity.

Limited and restricted contact rugby training is also now allowed. Varied training conditions will allow the return of tackling, lineouts and rucks, ensuring that players are prepared to perform these skills safely and effectively with some restrictions. Mauls, scrums, opposed lineouts or upright tackles are still not permissible as the transmission exposure risk remains high. Contact training sessions have to be carried out in small groups of no more than six players. Detail of the permitted training activity is available in the **return to contact training guidance**.

Recently updated guidance on physical activity issued by the Department for Education (DfE) permits rugby union to be played in line with our government-approved action plan, and therefore means that schools and colleges can also move to limited contact training under Stage D of the Return to Community Rugby Roadmap.

We know there are multiple decisions required on student bubbles, extra-curricular trips/enrichment, transport and physical activity before committing to playing rugby, particularly with other schools and colleges. Whilst we encourage a return to rugby activity as soon as possible, the decision to do so will ultimately rest with each school or college.

RFU guidance as well as **Government Coronavirus (Covid-19) Guidelines** should be followed.

You can read **more detailed information**.

Competition Update - Adult and Age Grade Season

As previously communicated in the Community Game Update of Tuesday 4 August, we have to reach Stage F (which will not be reached until at least four weeks after Stage E) before full contact competitive rugby can

commence. In line with the above announcement regarding move to Stage D, and with no set date on when we will reach Stage F, we can confirm that there will be no competitive rugby restart in October for adult or age grade rugby unless there is a dramatic improvement in the prevalence of the virus in the community. Specifically this means the following for the 2020-21 season:

Age Grade Rugby

The move to Stage D takes us into Playing Window three on the **Age Grade competition model**, and therefore:

1. All national RFU Age Grade Competitions for 2020-21 will be cancelled. This includes the National Schools Cup & Champions Trophy, Under 18 Clubs Cup (Boys), Under 15 and 18 Clubs Cups (Girls) and ACE League.
2. The Age Grade Season can be extended and will end on 31 May 2021 as a one off.

This early confirmation will help clubs, schools and colleges with their current planning and scheduling. There will be further information and guidance to support competitive playing opportunities and local fixtures for the Age Grade game shortly.

Adult Rugby

The adult league season (Level 3 & below for men, Level 2 & below for women) will not commence in October. The next announcement about when league rugby will commence for these levels will be on 2 October.



Other Important Updates

Managing visitors to your club

It is important to recognise the different requirements of managing other attendees at your venue.

The below supplementary information regarding spectators and visitors has been made available by the Government. This aligns to the **restarting of grassroots rugby guidance** we issued on Saturday 8 August. Clubs must continue to work within these guidelines to ensure that all facility, pre-activity and other general operation practices are safe and appropriate.

Clubs should also ensure they are appropriately set up and prepared for safely welcoming other clubs, supporters, parents, and other spectators to their venues, following the Government's social distancing guidelines, which you can read below. Outdoors you can meet in a group of up to six people from different households, or in larger groups if everyone is exclusively from one or two households – although social distancing must still be maintained with people who you do not live with unless they are in your support bubble.

Where it is anticipated that an activity will attract spectators, there should be a named person or persons with responsibility for ensuring adherence with these guidelines and ensuring the facility is Covid-19 Secure. The person(s) should carry out and publish a risk assessment for the activity which limits the number of spectators and focuses on the need to maintain social distancing on arrival, for the duration of the activity, and on departure.

Arrangements should also be put in place to support test and trace efforts by collecting information from spectators which is detailed enough to allow NHS Test and Trace to contact them if necessary. Read the maintaining records guidance section below for further information.

[Government Guidelines](#)

[Records Guidance](#)



Hiring out your venue

Clubs are reminded that they are responsible for ensuring that anyone hiring their venue adheres to the Government's coronavirus (Covid-19) and RFU guidelines. In addition, all rugby activities undertaken must be restricted to what is permitted at Stage D on the Return to Community Rugby Roadmap. Clubs in enhanced lockdown areas must also comply with any additional local restrictions. Any breach of the guidelines may invalidate insurance and could be in breach of both RFU and government regulations.

Join the NatWest Rugby Force and Pitch Up for Rugby weekends in September

The countdown is on to prepare for the forthcoming NatWest Rugbyforce weekend, which takes place on 5/6 September. More than 800 clubs will use this activity to improve their facilities ready for the Pitch Up for Rugby weekend on 12/13 September, when club members and visitors can enjoy playing and/or watching touch and Ready4Rugby on the pitch. You can **register for the weekend**.

More information on the NatWest Rugby Force and Pitch Up for Rugby weekends is also available below, along with a helpful guide. You can also view the **on demand webinar** which provides tips on how to successfully promote your event. Our top five tips include:

Tip 1 - Understand your audience

Your marketing plan should be understanding of your audience and how your product, service or in this case, event will appeal to them.

Tip 2 - Connect with your local community

An important audience is the wider local community and in particular local businesses.

Tip 3 - Start talking about the event

Once you know you're going to run an event then get the information out there as soon as you can.

Tip 4 - Be part of the big moments

Local media is a great way to promote your event and reach new people in your local community.

Tip 5 - What's next

There will be plenty of activity on all England Rugby channels from now until after the Pitch Up for Rugby weekend, so make sure you're part of the conversation.

[Helpful Guide](#)

[More Information](#)

Get involved in the #PitchUpForRugby Photo Challenge

As part of our #PitchUpForRugby celebration we're asking the rugby community to celebrate the sport's return by sharing their best grassroots photos. We'd like clubs, players and fans to get involved in our #PitchUpForRugby photo challenge. All you need to do is post your favourite grassroots rugby photo on Twitter or Instagram, tag a friend to do the same and use the hashtag #PitchUpForRugby between 8-13 September.

Please also ask your players to post their photos too as throughout that week we will be sharing lots of the photos that are posted on England Rugby's social media channels.

Local lockdown guidelines

Clubs are reminded that the powers around local restrictions lie with their local authorities. We are advised that unless local restrictions specifically mention restrictions on team sports and/or rugby, clubs should follow the NGB guidelines.

Clubs may need to limit their activities in line with any local restrictions and all are advised to consult with the local authority in which their facilities are

located should they be in any doubt. Information regarding any new local lockdown restrictions will be posted on the Government website below. We will provide an update to the game if there is any change in guidance to playing rugby union. You can read more information on the **Government local lockdown updates**.

The following local restrictions are currently in place:

Clubs in Leicester City are currently restricted to groups of no more than six in socially distanced activity and hence must remain at Stage B on the Return to Return to Community Rugby Roadmap. Read the **Leicester City detailed guidance**.

In Northampton, an outbreak of Covid-19 has been identified at certain Greencore factories. Any club member who has undertaken work in affected areas listed in the guidance, and the people they live with (or have formed a support bubble with), should self-isolate at home for the recommended periods specified and should not visit a rugby club. Read the detailed **Northampton Guidance** issued on Monday 31 August.

Currently, all clubs in Greater Manchester, East Lancashire, Preston, and West Yorkshire can continue to operate at Stage D on the Return to Community Rugby Roadmap as the Government website makes it clear that sports that have action plans approved by Government may continue to operate as per NGB guidelines. Read the **North of England guidance**.

It is important that clubs in Blackburn with Darwen, Oldham and Pendle read local authority guidance as different restrictions may apply, depending on the location of a rugby club. Read the Government guidance.

In Oldham and the following parts of Blackburn with Darwen, clubs can operate at Stage D on the Return to Community Rugby Roadmap: Blackburn South & Lower Darwen, Blackburn South East, Darwen East, Darwen South, Darwen West, Ewood, Livesey with Pleasington, Mill Hill & Moorgate, West Pennine.

There are wider restrictions in place in Pendle, but the Whitefield, Walverden, Southfield, Bradley, Clover Hill, Brierfield, Marsden areas in the wards of Nelson and Brierfield have additional restrictions and clubs are currently restricted to groups of no more than six in socially distanced activity and hence must remain at **Stage B** on the **Return to Community Rugby Roadmap**.

However, additional restrictions have been introduced in the following areas of Blackburn with Darwen which mean that residents should not socialise with people that they do not live with and, therefore, no rugby activity should take place outside your family bubble until local authority advice changes.

Blackburn with Darwen - (areas affected): Audley & Queen's Park, Bastwell & Daisyfield, Billinge & Beardwood, Blackburn Central, Little Harwood & Whitebirk, Roe Lee, Shear Brow & Corporation Park, Wensley Fold.

Please see local authority guidance below:

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council

Oldham Council

Pendle Borough Council



Webinar, workshops and podcasts

Running your Club – Virtual Workshops September to November 2020

The first of the next round of Club Matters Workshops will take place tomorrow, Wednesday 2 September. This Volunteer Experience Workshop will provide top tips on recruiting, retaining and rewarding volunteer, and you can register below.

The second workshop, Planning for the Future, will take place on Wednesday 16 September. This workshop identifies how to effectively plan and develop specific objectives to enable your club to tackle key issues and become sustainable, register below to take part.

Each workshop will take place between 6.30pm to 8.30pm and places are limited to 18 attendees, allocated on a first come, first served basis. You can discover all the **details of the workshops**.

[Club Matters](#)

[Planning Workshop](#)

Using GMS for Start of the Season Club Tasks - 3 September at 7pm

This webinar will build on last month's introduction to Player Profile & Age Grade Registration. We will update progress since the July Webinar and also on further enhancements to the Help Portal. We will also discuss how clubs can utilise GMS effectively for online membership payments, club communications and team management tasks.

Register below both to join the event and to view on demand after the webinar has finished.

[Register](#)

Catch up on previous webinars

For those who want to catch up on previous webinars, these are available on the England Rugby website. Please click on the links below:

[Club Webinars](#)

[Referee Webinars](#)

[Coach Webinars](#)

The Eddie Jones Coaching Podcast

In this latest podcast, Joe Schmidt, former Ireland and Leinster head coach, speaks about his journey from being an English teacher who also coached some basketball to coaching at the highest level leading Ireland to three Six Nations titles.

[Listen Now](#)

Rugby community doing great things

In addition to clubs helping their communities, we are now highlighting clubs' self-help initiatives, as well as activities being undertaken to improve diversity and inclusion at clubs, on englandrugby.com.

Mitsubishi Motors in the UK are proud supporters of the rugby volunteers across England who make up an integral part of the game. Help us recognise your work by sharing your club and individual stories and videos with veemontebello@rfu.com or patriciamowbray@rfu.com.

Click below to find out more about the Mitsubishi Motors Volunteer Recognition Programme.

[Recognition Programme](#)