

WEST NORFOLK RUGBY UNION FOOTBALL CLUB



Strategic Plan

2019 – 2025

‘Community Rugby at its best’

March 2019

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1. Background

West Norfolk Rugby Union Football Club is one of the oldest in the county of Norfolk and has a distinguished history. It still produces County, Regional and International Players at all ages and more recently has extended its influence into the production of a ladies and girls' squad that is rapidly developing a successful reputation. It is our wish to further enhance the development of this club in terms of its playing development and consolidate its reputation as a fully established community-based rugby club.

Securing the future of the club is paramount, the club has solid foundations with RFU Club accreditation which can act as a springboard to further improvements throughout the club. However, the success of the club in numbers terms across all sections means that we still have a challenge to deliver the facilities required to provide the services that we aspire to for all sections of the club.

In order to maintain progress both on and off the pitch this plan must provide clarity and direction in three major areas;

- People
 - o Players, Volunteers, Coaches, Referees, Members and Supporters
- Environment
 - o Facilities, Club, Schools, Universities, Colleges and Local Community
- Business
 - o Club Management, Finance, Governance, Policies and Procedures

Obviously, these plans are interdependent, with our objectives in Rugby and Community terms driving our needs in Facilities, Organisation and Financial terms.

It is imperative that the Strategic Plan should be a living document that is accessible to all club members and contains clearly identified objectives, milestones and owners. We will also require a management, governance and reporting approach that ensures development of, and progress against, agreed plans.

We need volunteers and others with specialist knowledge and/or expertise to share the workload and to provide effective management so the club will not be compromised. So please look within yourselves to offer to perform a role, no matter how small, to help keep West Norfolk Rugby Union Football Club moving forward successfully.

2. WNRFC Mission Statement

Our aim at West Norfolk Rugby Union Football Club is to create an environment where rugby can be played and enjoyed by all ages from six to sixty regardless of gender or ability.

We aim to be recognised as one of the leading clubs within Eastern Counties and we will strive for excellence not only on the pitch, but also through our involvement with schools and by reaching out to the local community.

We want to provide facilities and coaching of the highest standard to ensure that those playing and watching are proud to be a part of West Norfolk Rugby Union Football Club.

At West Norfolk we want to nurture our players and volunteers to ensure the best retention levels by developing a club that has an excellent rugby ethos and effective organisation together with a fun social environment.

The era of professional rugby is here to stay and whilst we must embrace the modern way it is essential that we remain focused on being a 'real' rugby club for our players, former players, volunteers, all WNRUFC members, families and spectators.

3. Summary of Objectives

- a) To create a Safe and Healthy Environment for the playing of Rugby Football
- b) To increase the membership across all age and gender groups, social members and volunteers
- c) To continue to fully integrate Ladies Rugby into the Senior section of the club ensuring equal opportunities for all.
- d) To have a schools and community rugby development programme that is recognised by the RFU, as 'best in practice'
- e) To maintain our 'Whole Club Accreditation' and positioning ourselves among the leaders in the county. To be financially well run, and to operate within the annual designated targets.
- f) To have enough facilities to provide for all members and all sections of the Club and that these facilities are recognised by both membership and external bodies as 'good', 'very good' or 'excellent' in all areas.
- g) Minimise the dropout rates across Age Grade Rugby by providing a sound and safe introduction to the sport with the emphasis on Participation and Skills Development.
- h) To have our Senior sides with 50% of players coming through West Norfolk 'ranks' and to run a minimum of 3 senior sides each season.
- i) To have created an established West Norfolk Girls rugby teams playing competitive rugby by the end of 2021 and maintain the success of the ladies side by the end of the plan period.
- j) To have a coherent coaching development policy throughout the club based on good coaching practices within the context of an enjoyable and well-disciplined environment. The policy will need to be clearly articulated and well resourced.
- k) To have membership satisfaction measured every year with 75% satisfied or extremely satisfied with the 'service' the club delivers.
- l) Improve our 'commercial' performance by increasing our annual revenues 35% by the end of the plan period.
- m) Increase the number of members volunteering for identified specific tasks including: -

Coaching, Refereeing, Player Management, Website Management, Social Media Oversight / Management, club house and Grounds Maintenance, Bar and Catering management, Fund Raising, Social Events, International Ticket Allocation Management, Health & Safety management, Publicity, Press Liaison and others

- n) Develop a strong 'valuing volunteers' programme and ensure that succession plans are developed for key posts within the club.
- o) Increase the number and relevance of all Club Sponsors
- p) Continue to implement the four-year staged development plan of the Club House and grounds according to the architectural Plans already agreed for completion prior to the 2025 the club centenary year.

4. People

Players, Volunteers, Coaches, Referees, Members, Supporters

Senior Rugby

WNRUFC aspires to play at the highest level it can achieve based primarily on a combination of the resources available within our own catchment area and the product of our own youth development programme.

To achieve this, we must produce a development plan every season, this should be produced by the end of the preceding season and would include a squad strength assessment.

The plan should cover:

- Objectives
- Coaching requirements
- Pre-season training
- Player development
- Player recruitment
- Skills development
- Fitness development
- Budget

This plan should be written to include all Senior teams in the club.

Social Rugby has a part to play in any successful rugby club and we must ensure that in a drive to improve the performance end of the club this area is not forgotten or neglected.

Accountability: The Player Development Group should meet regularly to develop and implement the annual plan. It should be led by the Director of Rugby and include Club Head Coach, Ladies Coach, First Team Manager, Second Team Manager and Colts Manager/coaching team.

Age Grade Rugby

The excellent work carried out by the Club should continue and adhere to the club operating procedures and objectives as documented in the club volunteers pack.

These objectives are: -

- To increase the numbers playing in all age groups
- Every child that starts the season finishes it
- Ensure that every child benefits from the coaching provided
- Squads are organised as RFU Guidelines and are based on the half game principle
- Children should not be pigeon holed in positions
- Attending and playing at West Norfolk is enjoyable

However, we must not rest on past success but should be looking at how to develop the club further. The size of the section means we are now one of the largest mini sections in the Eastern Counties which brings several challenges in providing consistently good quality sessions whether training or playing fixtures against other clubs.

Key areas of focus for the plan period will be;

- Improving both coaching and session quality.
- Providing the right balance between coaching and match play.
- Ensuring that all children are involved and provided for.
- Achieving a consistent quality of leadership and direction at each age group, both on and off the pitch.

Accountability: The Youth & Mini Chairman leads the Mini Committee to deliver against these objectives with support from the Director of Rugby, and the Club Coaching Coordinator.

Senior Rugby Transition

One of the most successful actions undertaken by the club in recent years has been the integration of Colts into senior level rugby. This was to provide a route to senior rugby for Colts. It is a daunting experience for young men to find themselves playing against fully grown and experienced men.

This allows groups of youngsters to more successfully make the transition into adult rugby having played as a group but with the added benefit of experience as part of the adult team.

Accountability: The Director of Rugby and Coaching Coordinator to deliver against these objectives

Coaching

Responsibility for ensuring effective and suitable coaching is provided across all sections of the club lies with the Director of Rugby and Coaching Coordinator. They group must take responsibility for defining the 'WNRUFC Coaching Approach'.

The primary objective of the club in coaching terms is to develop the quality of the coaching within the club and to provide the opportunity and support for individuals within the club to develop their coaching capabilities, whilst delivering a consistent and distinctively West Norfolk approach to coaching and playing.

A list of qualified coaches across all age groups and sections will be maintained on the Game Management System.

Accountability: Club Coaching Coordinator

Coaches are required to have the following in place

- First Aid – a valid qualification
- A current DBS certificate.
- Have undertaken Safeguarding training "Play It Safe"
- Have a valid "Headcase Concussion Certificate".

Coaches will then take advantage of the relevant Age Grade Rugby Training as offered by the RFU.

This can be followed by completing the following training opportunities

- England Rugby Coaching Award
- England Rugby Refereeing Award
- Scrum Factory
- Continuous Match Official Development Courses
- Coaching Under 14s Rugby
- CARDS
- Principles of Attack
- Principles of Defence
- Coaching Game Changers

Accountability: Club Coaching Coordinator with support from the Chair of Youth & Mini Rugby

Refereeing

Without good quality refereeing the game of Rugby cannot survive therefore it is incumbent on all Rugby clubs to develop a group of referees by creating an environment where individuals see refereeing as a valuable and rewarding undertaking and where they are treated respectfully by all members of WNRUFC.

Accountability: Referees coordinator supported by the Director of Rugby

- To appoint a 'Referees coordinator'
- To increase the number of qualified referees at the club.

First Aid

Thanks to the efforts of our First Aid coordinator we are in the great position of having a strong First Aid capability across all sections and as a result are envied by many of the clubs we play against. We must not rest on our laurels in this area and need to ensure we build upon this strong position by recruiting and training more first aiders across all three sections of the club.

Responsibility: First Aid coordinator supported by the Director of Rugby

- All teams to have a First Aid kit.
- Each team to have at least one trained first aider.
- All coaches to be first aid trained.

Safeguarding

Thanks to the efforts of our current safeguarding team we are in the great position of having a sound and well understood safeguarding policy in place.

We must not rest on our laurels in this area and need to ensure we build upon this strong position by ensuring all volunteers understand our safeguarding policies and have the appropriate clearances.

Responsibility: Safeguarding Officer and Assistants supported by the Executive Committee

- All teams to have at least one adult other than a coach who has completed a “Play it Safe” course.
- Club Safeguarding Officer to have completed the “In Touch” course.
- All Coaches to have completed “Play it Safe” training and have a valid “Headcase Concussion Certificate”.
- Club to follow RFU Safe Recruitment procedures.
- All coaches must have a valid DBS certificate.

5. Environment

Facilities, Club, Schools Universities, Colleges, local Community

Schools Programme

We must re-invigorate and extend the current Schools Programme by enhancing the current primary schools programme and extend it to take in agreed local secondary schools with the objective of re-establishing WNRUFC's reputation as the premier provider of in school rugby coaching in West Norfolk. This activity should also drive recruitment of youngsters, both boys and girls in to the club across all age groups.

We had been quite lucky in that our RFU Community rugby Coach had made a big impact in our local schools. Unfortunately, he left the RFU and has not been replaced and input into our local schools has stopped.

Accountability: The Executive Committee, the Club Coaching Coordinator and the Chair of Youth & Mini Rugby

Community Engagement Activity

As an integral part of the local community the club should identify other areas of collaboration with other organisations in the local community and be recognised as playing our part in creating the fabric of the local community.

This includes, but is not restricted to;

- South Wootton Beer Festival and garden fetes/ fairs
- Community leaders Programme
- Support for the local Police Communities Support Officer activities aimed at the local youngsters
- King Lynn Town Football Club
- Local schools including North and South Wootton Primary Schools
- Annual Scout Camp
- Marks & Spencer Charity Day
- Comic Relief / Sports Relief events / games

Accountability: Executive Committee with support of the Chair of Youth, the Director of Rugby

Milestones: Appoint a Community Liaison Officer

Facilities

Over several years there has been a lack of investment or development at the club with focus on stabilisation.

There are plans in place to address the underinvestment in our current clubhouse to improve the bar, club room, showers/heating etc. In the recent past we have secured funding for upgrading the pitch maintenance.

This is all good work and must continue, however our current footprint, is insufficient to cater for all our needs.

Therefore, our Facilities Strategy must cover both maximising potential of our current facilities as well as finding ways to meet the needs of all sections of the club. It is proposed that the following Club Development is undertaken within the next 5 years:

- **Disabled access**
Construction of external lift tower to right of existing club entrance and extension of entrance lobby.
Installation of lift with access through external wall on first floor.
- **Refurbishment of WC's, entrance and stairs**
Complete refurbishment of ladies and gent's WC's and WHB along with replacement of floor in WC, lobby and stair well.

- **Extension of Clubhouse above changing rooms**
As per design drawings
- **Redevelopment of the former squash club to incorporate new changing rooms**
As per design drawings
- **Redevelopment of existing changing rooms**
As per design drawings

Cost details can be found in Appendix 1.

Current Facilities Upkeep

Pitches

Our pitches are our most important facility and must be maintained to the best level possible. The pitch maintenance has recently been reviewed and a new contractor appointed to ensure the current levels are maintained or improved if possible.

A pitch maintenance programme has been developed and this needs to be adhered to and revisited on an annual basis. The position of appointed grounds contractor has been appointed under the direction of the Finance and Performance Committee.

Training Facilities

We must look to utilise the former squash club facility as a gymnasium and indoor training area for all club teams. This would include additional toilet/ changing areas and dedicated ladies/ girls changing areas.

Changing/Showering Facilities

Improve the quality of the current facilities in the main clubhouse by ensuring the boilers and showers can cope with the demands placed on them.

Clubhouse/Bar Area

Improve the clubhouse and bar area to help drive an increase in usage both within and outside the club to maximize rental income. New licensing laws require the club to have a named licensee if we wish to rent the bar facilities out to external parties, therefore we need to decide on if and how we wish to exploit the bar and/or clubhouse to bring in additional income.

6. Business

Club Management, Finance, Governance, Policies, Procedures

Organisation

Our current organisation structure has evolved in several areas over the past 4 years to ensure sound management of the club, alignment with best practice, maximisation of volunteer time and clear lines of responsibility.

Key areas of success have been in our Safeguarding provision, our First Aid work and in the production of our Volunteers pack. These three activities and the individuals concerned have been fundamental in ensuring we gained our RFU Club Accreditation and in enhancing our reputation in the Rugby Community. This work must continue and be supported by the committee to ensure all objectives are met.

New Roles

Changes since the last plan include the creation of the Director of Rugby, Club Coaching Coordinator and the Chair of Women's Rugby role.

However, there are still some areas of challenge which will require the creation of new posts, a few, which have been identified in this document.

These are: -

- Referees Coordinator
- Community Liaison Officer
- Facilities Manager

In addition, this document recommends the creation of two new roles which have been driven by the increasing size of the club and the volume of work this entails.

The first is to split the responsibilities of the current Director of Rugby role in to two areas; Firstly, an oversight and co-ordination role focusing on Rugby activities throughout the club and leading the Senior section – this role would include chairing the Senior Rugby Group.

Secondly, a focus on the performance element of the club, more akin to the traditional Director of Rugby role we see in other clubs, this would include responsibility for coaching, player development and recruitment and the performance of the First XV and Seconds XV – This would be the Director of Rugby. Finally, the role of Club Captain needs to be re-invigorated to provide oversight and leadership for the rest of the senior section and the social rugby side of the club.

The challenges we face as a club are both long term directional and day to day management of an increasing complex and growing organisation. To address these challenges the skills and time commitments are such that the committee must ensure that there is focus and ownership on both the operational and strategic management of the club.

Finally, the lifeblood of this, and many other voluntary organisations, is our volunteers, without whom the club could not function. It is important that we look to not only maintain the flow of volunteers but to increase it and become more systematic in skills matching to ensure that the undoubted talent and capability that exists within the membership is identified and given the opportunity to add value in whatever way they can to the successful running of the club.

Committees

The current committee structure was introduced during the 2016/17 Season,

The Executive Committee

Finance and Procurement Committee

To obtain best value and financial control.

Playing Committees

To organise on field activities.

Age Grade Rugby Committee

To organise on field activities for all mini and Youth Rugby

Senior Rugby Committee

To organise on field activities for all Senior Rugby

Social and Fundraising Committee

To Generate income to support the running of the club

This committee exists within the structure but has not formally been established.

Communication and Publicity Committee

This new Committee is critical to the future success of the club and must be effectively established, led and resourced

The activity of these groups needs to be coordinated but their remits are different. Chairmanship would be recommended by the group at the beginning of the season and approved by the Executive Committee.

Commercial

In order to finance the development of the club a sound commercial plan needs to be created that looks at enhancing existing income streams such as the bar and merchandising, developing underperforming areas such as sponsorship and clubhouse bookings and identifying new revenue opportunities.

As well as club generated income a more systematic approach to securing grants needs to be developed, both from traditional streams such as RFU, Sport England and the Local councils, but also new sources such as the Carbon Trust.

This is an important area that has proved difficult to resource, we must make it a priority to create manageable roles and identify individuals who are happy to take on various tasks in this area.

'Core Roles' that need to be filled e.g. Sponsorship Manager, Grant Identification and Application secretary etc. and approved by the management committee.

Accountability: Finance and Performance

Finances

The club has a proud history of always managing within our means and as a result has returned an operating surplus for at least the last 3 years.

The club must always operate in a way that ensures it is not over extended financially.

The challenge of developing the club on and off the pitch will require expenditure and investments and it is critical that we keep a close eye on both our operating performance and our investment plans. Therefore, the plans developed by the various sub-committees must be approved in the context of affordability and the finance and performance committee will manage against any budget constraints that exist.

Responsibility for ensuring we make sound budgeting and investment decisions lies with the Executive Committee acting on advice from the Finance and Performance Committee.

It is the responsibility of the Treasurer to ensure that a sound budgeting and tracking process is in place and adhered to and to provide advice and guidance to the committee on how best to fund the activities identified within their plans.

Governance

Lessons learned over the last four years are that there is a shortage of volunteers to populate the ideal sub-committee structure and ultimately the responsibility for driving and implementing plans falls, in the majority of cases, on the executive committee and the individuals on that committee.

As a result, we need to prioritise our focus and ensure that the most critical areas for the club produce plans for the start of each season and agree budgets accordingly with the Treasurer. The recommendation of this report is that the specific plans to be produced should cover: -

- People
 - o Players, Volunteers, Coaches, Referees, Members and Supporters
- Environment
 - o Facilities, Club, Schools, Universities, Colleges and Local Community
- Business
 - o Club Management, Finance, Governance, Policies and Procedures

The remaining objectives of membership satisfaction and valuing volunteers will be held at the executive committee level by the Chairman, membership satisfaction should be an outcome driven by all the activities in the agreed plans and the effectiveness of the executive committee as a whole.

Process

All plans produced by the new committee structure over the summer should be presented at the September Executive Committee meeting. They should include the objectives supported and the key milestones. RFU Accreditation and Health Check documentation will be considered at the appropriate time.

The committees will monitor progress against milestones and interrogate on an exception basis.

Operating budget is collated and agreed by the Treasurer and budget holding committee meetings by the end of March each year and presented to the Committees for approval at the April meetings.

Budget requirements sitting outside day to day operations, including Capital Expenditure and other one-off major expenses must be agreed with the Treasurer and incorporated in a medium-term finances plan. This plan should be produced and presented to the committees each half year – April and October.

APPENDIX 1

WEST NORFOLK RUFC REDEVELOPMENT

Phase 1 - Disabled access

**Construction of external lift tower to right of existing club entrance and extension of entrance lobby.
Installation of lift with access through external wall on first floor.**

PC sum £ Sponsored

Phase 2 - Refurbishment of WC's, entrance and stairs

**Complete refurbishment of ladies and gent's WC's and WHB.
Replace floor in WC, lobby and stair well**

PC sum £ 40,000 - Whole amount sponsored

Phase 3 - Extension of Clubhouse above changing rooms

As per design drawings

PC sum £

Phase 4 - Redevelopment of squash club to incorporate new changing rooms

As per design drawings

PC sum £

Phase 5 - Redevelopment of existing changing rooms

As per design drawings

PC sum £