

Honorary Secretary Report to Buckinghamshire RFU AGM 2023

CB Executive & County Club Meetings

The Bucks Executive has formally met 6 times this year on a bi-monthly basis by zoom to ensure that it remains on top of all matters.

The CB has hosted 3 Club Chairs meetings These meetings have proved very successful in the County getting to the leaders in each club and to hear their issues first hand.

The County Director of Rugby forums for club DORs have also continued.

The Chair & Hon Sec attended an RFU / CB Community Game Congress in September 2022, which outlined the RFU's thoughts and work on a 10-year strategy for the community game. Inevitably, it had a rather centralised 'RFU staff' view of the game and this led the CB Exec to initiate our Clubs Conference to get the view from the coalface.

This two day Conference in April was attended by chairs and reps from all clubs. The event was well received by the Clubs and the CB Exec were very pleased with the degree of engagement from the clubs. It has provided us all with a clear picture of the issues and challenges within our clubs, allowed clubs to share some solutions and allowed us to document issues / ideas / where help is needed etc. It has given clubs the personal links to go out to their neighbouring clubs for help and ideas and has given input to County on where it, and the RFU, can best assist clubs.

Facility Grants & Loans

There has been significant activity on this front this season with the RFU providing funding for facility improvements focussed on womens and girls rugby. This is driven off the back of Womens RWC 2025 in England. Eight clubs have been awarded small grants to support female toilet / sanitary provision upgrades, two clubs have been awarded £10K grants to improve social spaces and two clubs are in the process of applying for very significant grants / loans to create additional female changing rooms. The County continues to provide small grants to support clubs when it can and to encourage clubs to take full advantage of any small RFU pots of money that come up from time to time.

Tour Approvals

11 different clubs applied for Tour approvals covering around 40 age group tours, thus proving that touring amongst the Minis and Juniors is back to pre Covid levels

RFU communications with CBs and Clubs

The demands on community rugby volunteers from RFU employed staff continue to grow. We push back when this seems unjustified, and although improvements in processes happen, we continue to advocate for more 'feet on the ground' RFU staff working with clubs rather than the admin focused HQ based staff.

Finlay Gemmell

Buckinghamshire RFU Honorary Secretary 15th June 2023